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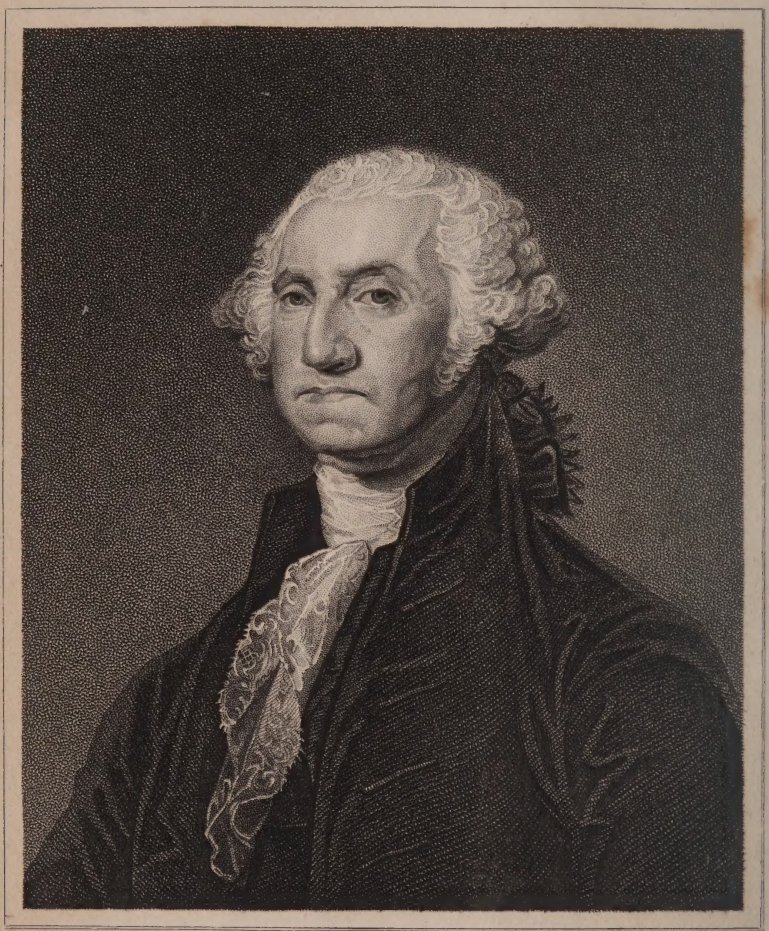

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ELEGANT EXTRACTS,

Originally Compiled by the

REVEREND VICESIMUS KNOX, D.D.

A New Edition

PREPARED BY

James G. Percival

VOL. IV. EPISTLES.

Geo: Corbould. Esq^r. Del. *Eng^d. by J.B. Neagle*

BOSTON

PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY SAMUEL WALKER (HARLEM PLACE) WASHINGTON STREET

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ELEGANT EXTRACTS,

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USEFUL AND ENTERTAINING PASSAGES,

FROM THE

BEST ENGLISH AUTHORS AND TRANSLATIONS;

PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED

FOR THE USE OF YOUNG PERSONS.

ORIGINALLY COMPILED BY THE

REV. VICESIMUS KNOX, D. D.

A new Edition, embellished with elegant Engravings.

PREPARED BY

JAMES G. PERCIVAL.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.—EPISTLES.

Boston:

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JNO. W. DAVIS, *Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

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ELEGANT EPISTLES.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

RECENT LETTERS.

SECTION I.

FROM MRS. ELIZABETH MONTAGU, LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE, DR. JOHNSON, AND OTHERS.

LETTER I.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Hatch, 11, 1738.

Madam,

Your grace's very entertaining letter was sent to me at sir Wyndham Knatchbull's, where I have been about three weeks, and propose returning to Mount Morris in a few days. I am as angry as I dare be with your grace, that you did not send any account of those charming fireworks, which I fancy were the prettiest things imaginable. I very much approve your love of variety in trifles, and constancy in things of greater moment. I think you have great reason to call exchange robbery, though the common saying is to the contrary. For my part, who never saw one man that I loved, I scarce imagine I could be fond of a dozen, and come to that unreasonableness so ridiculously set forth in Hippolyto in the Tempest; at present I seldom like above six or eight at a time. I fancy in matrimony one finds variety in one, in the charming vicissitudes of

"Sometimes my plague, sometimes my darling;
Kissing to-day, to-morrow snarling."

Then the surprising and sudden transformation of the obsequious and obedient lover, to the graceful haughtiness and imperiousness of the commanding husband, must be so agreeable a metamorphosis as is not to be equalled in all Ovid's collection, where I do not remember a lamb's being transformed into a bear. Your grace is much to be pitied, who has never known the varieties I mention, but has found all the sincerity of friendship, and complacency of a lover in the same person; and I am sure my lord duke is a most miserable man, who has found one person who has taken away that passion for change, which is the boast and happiness of so many people. Pray tell my lord Dupplin that I never heard of a viscount that was a prophet in my life. I assure you I am not going to tie the fast knot you mention:

whenever I have any thoughts of it I shall acquaint your grace with it, and send you a description of the gentleman with his good qualities and faults in full length. At present I will tell you what sort of a man I desire, which is above ten times as good as I deserve; for gratitude is a great virtue, and I would have cause to be thankful. He should have a great deal of sense and prudence to direct and instruct me, much wit to divert me, beauty to please me, good humour to indulge me in the right, and reprove me gently when I am in the wrong; money enough to afford me more than I can want, and as much as I can wish; and constancy to like me as long as other people do, that is, till my face is wrinkled by age, or scarred by the small pox; and after that I shall expect only civility in the room of love, for as Mrs. Clive sings,

"All I hope of mortal man,
Is to love me whilst he can."

When I can meet all these things in a man above the trivial consideration of money, you may expect to hear I am going to change the easy tranquillity of mind I enjoy at present, for a prospect of happiness; for I am like Pygmalion, in love with a picture of my own drawing, but I never saw an original like it in my life; I hope when I do, I shall, as some poet says, find the statue warm.

I am, madam, your most obedient humble servant,

ELIZ. ROBINSON.

LETTER II.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

—— 1738.

Madam,

As your grace tenders my peace of mind, you will be glad to hear I am not so angry as I was. I own I was much moved in spirit at hearing you neglected your health; but since you have had advice, there is one safe step taken. As for me, I have swallowed the weight of an apothecary in medicine; and what I am the better, except more patient and less credulous, I know not. I have learnt to bear my infirmities, and not to trust to the skill of physicians for curing them. I endeavor to drink deep of philosophy, and to be wise when I cannot be merry, easy when I cannot be glad, content with what cannot be mended, and patient where there is no redress. The mighty can do no more, and the wise seldom do as much. You see I am in the main content with myself, though many would quarrel with such an insignificant, idle, inconsistent person; but I am resolved to make the best of all circumstances around me, that this short life may not be half lost in pains, "well remembering and applying the necessity of dying." Between the periods of birth and burial, I would fain insert a little happiness, a little pleasure, a little peace: to-day is ours, yesterday is past, to-morrow may never come. I wonder people can so much forget death, when all we see before us is but succession; minute succeeds to minute, season to season, summer dies as winter comes. The dial marks the change of hour, every night brings death-like sleep, and morning seems a resurrection; yet, while all changes and decays, we expect no alteration, unapt to live, unready to die, we lose the present and seek the future, ask much for what we have not, thank Providence but little for what we have; our youth has no joy, our middle age no quiet, our old age no ease, no indulgence; ceremony is the tyrant of this day, fashion of the other, business of the next. Little is allowed to freedom, happiness, and contemplation, the adoration of our Creator, the admiration of his works, and the inspection of ourselves. But why should I

trouble your grace with these reflections. What my little knowledge can suggest, you must know better: what my short experience has shown, you must have better observed. I am sure any thing is more acceptable to you than news and compliments, so I always give your grace the present thoughts of my heart. I beg my compliments to lady Oxford, who I hope is better.

I am, madam, your grace's most obedient servant, E. ROBINSON.

LETTER III.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Mount Morris, Oct. 10, 1739.

Madam,

IT is extremely good of your grace to continue to make me happy at a time when I can neither see nor hear from you. I should have written upon my leaving lady Knatchbull's, but the country and the head-ache are certainly the worst correspondents, as well as the dullest companions, in the world. I have promised continually to trouble you no more, having exhausted all my epistolary matter; but I cannot help expressing my gratitude to my lord duke, who is certainly a person of indefatigable good nature. I hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing you in my way to Bath, and beg you will give orders to your porter to admit me: for if not, as I am grown thin since my indisposition, he will think it is my ghost and shut the door; and if you should afterwards read in your visiting book, Miss Robinson from the shades below, you will guess the meaning of it; but remember I am not going to be dipt in Lethe, but the Bath water. I shall stay but a few days in town, and then proceed with my father and mother to the waters of life and recovery. My papa's chimney-corner hyp will never venture to attack him in a public place; it is the sweet companion of solitude, and the offspring of meditation; the disease of an idle imagination, not the child of hurry and diversion. I am afraid that, with the gayeties of the place, and the spirits the waters give, I shall be perfect *sal volatile*, and open my mouth and evaporate. I wish you and his grace much comfort, and lady Bell much joy upon the occasion of her marriage. I imagine she only waits for the writings. Lawyers, who live by delay, do not consider it is often the death of love. They would rather break an impatient lover's heart, than make a flaw in the writings. Then they think of the jointure, and separation of the turtles, who think they can never part from, or survive each other; at last they are convinced they loved, but the lawyer reasoned. Your grace, by experience, knows what makes matrimony happy; from observation I can tell what makes it miserable. But I can define matrimonial happiness only like wit, by negatives: 'tis not kissing, that's too sweet; 'tis not scolding, that's too sour; 'tis not raillery, that's too bitter; nor the continual shuttlecock of reply, for that's too tart. In short, I hardly know how to season it to my taste; but I would neither have it tart, nor mawkishly sweet. I should not like to live upon metheglin or verjuice; and then, for that agreeable variety of "sometimes my plague, sometimes my darling," it would be worse than any thing; for recollection would never suffer one either entirely to love them when good, or hate them when bad. I believe your grace will easily suppose I am not a little pleased at escaping the stupidity of a winter in the country. I have heard people speak with comfort of being as merry as a cricket, but for my part I do not find the joy of being cohabitant of the fire side with them.

I am in very good spirits here, and should be so were I in a desert; I borrow from the future the happiness I expect; and from the past, by recollection, bring it back to the present. I can sit and live over those hours I passed so pleasantly with you when I was in town, and in hope enjoy those I may have the pleasure of passing with you again. I was a month at Hatch, where the good humour of the family makes every thing agreeable; we had great variety in the house: children in cradles, and old women in elbow chairs. I think the family may be looked upon like the three tenses, the present, past, and future. I am very glad to hear the marquis and the little ladies are well; I beg my compliments to his grace. The hour for ghosts to rest is come, so I must vanish; I shall appear again in a white sheet of paper ere long; but what can I write from a place where I know nothing but that I am, your grace's humble servant,

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER IV.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

———1739.

Madam,

As I always acquaint your grace with my motions from place to place, I think it incumbent on me to let you know I died last Thursday; having that day expected to hear of a certain duchess, and being disappointed, I fell into a vexation, and from thence into a chagrin, and from that into a melancholy, with a complicated *et cetera*, and so expired, and have since crossed the Styx, though Charon was loth to receive me into the boat. Pluto inquired into the cause of my arrival; and upon telling him it, he said, *that* lady had sent many lovers there by her cruelty, but I was the first friend who was despatched by her neglect. I thought it proper to acquaint you with my misfortune, and therefore called for the pen and ink Mrs. Rowe had used to write her Letters from the Dead to the Living, and consulted with the melancholy lovers you had sent there before me, what I should say to you. One was for beginning, Obdurate fair; one for addressing you in metre; another in metaphor; but I found these lovers so sublime a set of ghosts, that their advice was of no service to me, so I applied to the other inhabitants of Erebus. I went to Ixion for counsel; but his head was so giddy with turning, he could not give me a steady opinion; Sisyphus was so much out of breath with walking up hill he could not make me an answer. Tantalus was so dry he could not speak to be understood; and Prometheus had such a gnawing at his stomach he could not attend to what I said. Presently after I met Eurydice, who asked me if I could sing a tune, for Pluto had a very good ear, and I might release her for ever, for though

> "Fate had fast bound her,
> With Styx nine times round her,
> Yet singing a tune was victorious."

I told her I had no voice, but that there was one lady Wallingford in the other world, who could sing and play like her own Orpheus, but that I hoped she would not come thither a great while. The Fatal Sisters said they had much fine thread to spin for her yet, and so madam Eurydice must wait with patience.—Charon says the packet-boat is ready, and ghosts will not wait, so I must take my leave of you to my great grief; for, as Bays in the Rehearsal says, ghosts are not obliged to speak sense, I could have added a great deal more. Pluto gives his service, and Proserpine is your humble servant. We live here very elegantly; we dine upon essence like the duke

of Newcastle; we eat and drink the soul and spirit of every thing; we are all thin and well-shaped, but what most surprised me was to see sir Robert Austin,* who arrived here when I did, a perfect shadow; indeed I was not so much amazed that he had gone the way of all flesh, as to meet him in the state of all spirit. At first I took him for sir ———, his cousin; but upon hearing him say how many ton he was shrunk in circumference, I easily found him out. I shall wait patiently till our packet wafts me a letter from your grace: being now divested of passion, I can, as a ghost, stay a post or two under your neglect, though flesh and blood could not bear it. All that remains of me is your faithful shade, E. ROBINSON.

P. S. Pray lay up my letter where it cannot hear the cock crow, or it will vanish, having died a maid.—There are a great many apes who were beaus in your world, and I have a promise of three more who made a fine figure at the last birth-day, but cannot outlive the winter.

Written from Pluto's palace by darkness visible.

LETTER V.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Bath, Jan. 30, 1740.

Madam,

IT is said, Expectation enhances the value of a pleasure. I think your letters want nothing to add to the satisfaction they give, and I would not have your grace take the method of delay to give a zest to your favours: however, your letter did give me the greatest pleasure; I must have been sunk in insensibility if it had not made me happy. I have long been convinced it was in your power to give me happiness, and I shall begin to think health too, for I have been much better ever since I received it. I hope the duke is entirely well of his new disorder; I am sure his grace will never have it much, for it is a distemper always accompanied by peevishness; and as he has not the smallest grain of that in his composition, he can never have a constitution troubled with the gout. What will this world come to now duchesses drink gin and frequent fairs! I am afraid your gentlemen did not pledge you, or they might have resisted the frost and fatigue by the strength of that comfortable liquor. I want much to know whether your grace got a ride in the flying coach, which is part of the diversion of a fair. I am much obliged to you for wishing me of the party; I should have liked it extremely. When you go again, pray beware of a thaw, lest you should meet with your final dissolution. Lady Berkshire, Mrs. Greville, and her daughter, called upon me yesterday. Every body takes pity on me now I am confined so much. I am much obliged to your grace for forming schemes for me. If any castles come to my share, they must be airy ones, for I have no materials to build them on *terra firma*. I am not a good chimerical architect: and besides, I would rather dwell this summer in a small room in a certain noble mansion near Gerrard's Cross, than in the most spacious building I could have. I shall not be troublesome to you in town; for our stay here will be so long, that our family will hardly go down till the end of May. I have many things to say which can be conveyed to your knowledge by no way but through your ear. The time will come that we shall meet at Philippi. Time, though swift, seems slow while its progress is towards our wishes: if I was at the old gentleman's elbow I should shake his hour-glass

* A very fat man.

to hasten the arrival of April. While I am impatient to see you, I cannot help wondering dean Swift should think it an unreasonable thing for lovers to desire the gods to annihilate both space and time to make two lovers happy. For my part, I have wished, in the more reasonable passion of friendship, the loss of the three months, and at least as many counties, that we might be together. If love, like faith, could remove mountains, you would see me with you by to-morrow morning; except the humorous lieutenant, no one was ever so much in love with one of their own sex, as I am with your grace. If I should ever be half as much enamoured of one of the other, what will become of me in this world,

"Where sighs and tears are bought and sold,
And love is made but to be told?"

While Hymen holds by Mammon's charter, my affections would assuredly be slighted, having nothing but myself in the scale, and some few vanities that make me light. What is a woman without gold or fee-simple? A toy while she is young, and a trifle when she is old. Jewels of the first water are good for nothing till they are set: but as for us who are no brilliants, we are nobody's money till we have a foil, and are encompassed with the precious metal. As for the intrinsic value of a woman, few know it, and nobody cares. Lord Foppington appraised all the female virtues, and bought them in under a 1000*l.* sterling; and the whole sex have agreed that no one better understood the value of womankind. I admire the heroic exploits of the *beaus* at the playhouse; but could these Narcissus's break the looking-glass and destroy the image of themselves! Beating the actors off the stage exceeded the valorous enterprise of Don Quixotte when he demolished the puppets. I hear one of the gentlemen (*fortune de la guerre*) was caught in a trap, and descended, ghost-like, under the stage: I fancy he called out, Fight, fight! with as much solemnity as Hamlet's ghost cries, Swear! I think this practical wit is a little dangerous. I hope a law will be made, that no man shall be witty upon another until he fetches blood, or unfurnishes or fires a house, for the jest's sake; for really it becomes necessary to restrain the active genius of our youths; and especially it shall be ordered, that no person be witty if they cannot pay damages, and that unlawful jests, &c. &c. be forborne.—With compliments to my lord duke I take my leave. I am, madam, your grace's, &c.

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER VI.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to Miss S. Robinson.

Whitehall, ——.

Dear sister,

I PROPOSE to entertain you with some poetry, therefore you will excuse a lack of prose for this post. I am pretty well in health, but at this present instant not in high spirits; a key below impertinence and talkativeness. However the Muses, fair ladies, and Mr. Lyttleton, a fine gentleman, will entertain you more agreeably. The verses were written at lord Westmoreland's: I think they are pretty. Either I am very partial to the writer, or Mr. Lyttleton has something of an elegance in all his compositions, let the subject be ever so trifling. I believe what he says in praise of solitude and the country is to please Apollo, who, of all employments, preferred that of a shepherd. To Juno he puts up petitions of more pride and ambition; and from Minerva he has not unsuccessfully asked wisdom and the arts of policy. Hap-

py is the genius that can drink inspiration at every stream, and gather similes with every nosegay!

Does the world want odd people, or do we want strange cousins, that the St—nes must increase and multiply? No folly ever becomes extinct, fools do so establish posterity. Mr. S—— has a living of £100 a year, with a prospect of better preferment. He was a great rake, but having been japanned and married, his character is new varnished. I do not comprehend what my cousin means by their little desires; if she had said their little stomachs, it had been some help to their economy. But when people have not sufficient for the necessaries of life, what avails it that they can do without its pomps and superfluities? Mr. B—— came up in the park to me to-day, and asked me if I would give A—— leave to beg my pardon, for that he had ordered him to do it. I desired he would tell him that he was as safe in my contempt as he could be in my forgiveness, and that I had rather not be troubled with him. I thought the valorous captain would put him upon his penitentials; and if A——n's sword was no sharper than his satire, and his courage no greater than his wit, the challenge would not be dangerous. But he is well aware of

"the perils that environ
The man that meddles with cold iron."

I really think this fright will give him such a terror of steel, that he will hardly endure the blade of a knife this twelve-month. I hope in his repentance he will not turn his hand to commendation; for though I am not vexed at the spattering of his abuse, I could never endure the daub of his panegyric.

The duchess has presented me with a very fine lace head and ruffles. My duty to papa and mamma. In great haste yours, E. R.

LETTER VII.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Hayton, May, 5,——

Madam,

In this wicked world your grace will see honest sincerity go generally worse drest than flattery. In the true affection of my heart, I am going to write a long letter upon paper ungilded and unadorned; but truth, as your friend, may visit you in a *dishabille;* and by the length of my paper, and its homeliness, I compliment you with the opinion of your having two rare virtues, patience and humility, to endure and accept such an epistle. I had the pleasure of my lord duke's letter yesterday; all the contents were agreeable, and especially your commands to write, though I am not just in the situation one would wish a correspondent. I wish you could see the furniture of my desk, which is all eaten by the worms. My pen has served the good old man for his accounts these forty years; I can hardly make it write any thing but *imprimis, item, ditto;* if I would thank your grace for the many obligations I have received, it is ready to write a receipt in full; or would I express that you have my entire affection and esteem, it is going to write, for value received; and when I would enumerate your favours, it is in haste to run to the sum total. I believe since the pen was dipped in ink it never made a compliment, or was employed to express one generous sentiment of friendship. It has been worn out in the service of gain; to note pounds, shillings, and pence, with the balance on the side of profit, has been its business. I hear the burlesque of sweet Pamela and her dear master is very

droll; if it has ridiculed them as well as it has Dr. Middleton and his hero, I fancy it must be diverting; but high things are better burlesqued than low; the dedication was really admirable, and I fancy must mortify both the author and the patron. Indeed I believe my friend was the first man that ever complimented a gentleman upon not cramming till he was sick, and not lying in bed longer than he could sleep; but flattery must be at the dinner and the levee of the great. I wish lord H——y may not get the cholic with his vegetable diet; as it turns to vanity and wind, he will be too much puffed up with it. I cannot imagine, after this, how the doctor can ever dedicate a book to the duke of Newcastle, unless he says, as Pope does, that by various methods they aim at praise, and that

"Lucullus, when frugality could charm,
Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm."

I believe many great men have been celebrated for their banquets, but my lord H—— has the honour of being the first who ever recommended himself to an author by his fasting. I had the pleasure yesterday of a long letter from my sister: her eyes are perfectly well, but she has not made any use of them but in writing to me; and, I must tell you, her care made her steep her letter in vinegar, for fear it should prove as fatal as Pandora's present. The caution diverted me extremely, for I thought the letter seemed as if it had been sent for a broken forehead. My mamma made me the first visit last Wednesday. If the weather was more mild I might soon hope to meet my sister, but it confines her at home. I had the satisfaction of hearing from my brother Robinson, last post, that he finds great benefit by the Bath waters; but while I was rejoicing at this good news, he informed me Mrs. Friend had just lost her little daughter by an unhappy accident. I know hers and Mr. Friend's tenderness to be such, that they will be extremely grieved at it, and the aggravation of its not being in the common order of nature will add much to the affliction. If your grace continues to exhort me to write, you must not be surprised if I entertain you with the conversation of the place I am in; you may expect a very good receipt to make cheese and syllabub, or, for your more elegant entertainment, a treatise upon the education of turkeys. I would catch you some butterflies, but I have not seen any pretty ones. I have ordered people upon all our coasts to seek for shells, but have not yet got any pretty ones: if Neptune knew your grace wanted some, he would send his maids of honour, the Nereides, to look for them, and Proteus would take the shape of a shell in hopes of having a place in your grotto; I intend to tell the inhabitants of the deep whom they are for, and they will all assist me; even the Leviathan will not be worse than the judge; if he eats the fish, he will give us the shell. I am sorry Mrs. Pendarvis has left you for the summer; Dash too talks of departing; when they are gone London will lose much of its charms for you, and the country is not yet delightful; even this sweet month, the fairest of the year, does not disclose its beauties. Pray make my compliments to my lord duke, and give a thousand kisses to the dear little ones, and assure them I should be glad to deliver them myself. I hope Mrs. Pendarvis had a long letter from me the beginning of this week. Farewell, my dear lady duchess; farewell is the hardest word in our language, and to you I generally speak it the last of a thousand. I am, dear madam, your most obliged servant,

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER VIII.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

May 7.

Madam,

I HAD begun a letter to your grace last post, but was interrupted by company; then did I regret having left the humble and quiet habitation to which the idle and the noisy did not resort; and where I had leisure to permit me to do what I did like, and no ceremonious duty to oblige me to do that I did not; for what a mortification to leave writing to you to entertain—whom? Why, an honest boisterous sea captain, his formal wife, most wondrous civil daughter, and a very coxcombical son; the good captain is so honest and so fierce, a bad conscience and a cool courage cannot abide him; he thinks he has a good title to reprove any man that is not as honest, and to beat any man that is not as valiant as himself; he hates every vice of nature but wrath, and every corruption of the times but tyranny; a patriot in his public character, but an absolute and angry monarch in his family; he thinks every man a fool in politics who is not angry, and a knave if he is not perverse: indeed, the captain is well in his element, and may appear gentle compared to the waves and wind, but on the happy quiet shore he seems a perfect whirlwind; he is much fitter to hold converse with the hoarse Boreas in his wintry cavern, than to join in the whispers of Zephyrus in Flora's honeymoon of May. I was afraid, as he walked in the garden, that he would fright away the larks and nightingales; and expected to see a flight of sea-gulls hovering about him; the amphibious pewet found him too much a water animal for his acquaintance, and fled with terror. I was angry to find he was envious of admiral Vernon; but considering his appetite to danger and thirst of glory, I endeavoured to excuse something of the fault; it is fine when danger becomes sport, and hardships voluptuousness. All this is brought about by the magic sound of fame. Dr. Young will tell us the same principle puts the feather in the hat of the beau, which erects the high plume in the helmet of the hero; but if so, how gentle is the enchantment of the pretty man of praise, compared to the high madness of the bold hero of renown! Very safely trips the red-heeled shoe, but most perilous is the tread of honour's boot! But *a-propos*, how do our scarlet *beaus* like this scheme of going abroad? Do the pretty creatures, who mind no other thing but the ladies and the king, like to leave the drawing-room and ridotto for camps and trenches? Should the chance of war bring a slovenly corpse betwixt the wind and their nobility, can they abide it?—Dare they behold friends dead, and enemies living? I think they will die of a panic, and save their enemies' powder. Well, they are proper gentlemen, heaven defend the nunneries! as for the garrisons, they will be safe enough. The father confessors will have more consciences to quiet, than the surgeons will have wounds to dress; I would venture a wager Flanders increases in the christenings more than in the burials of the week. I am your grace's faithful and very affectionate

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER IX.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Mount Morris, June 25, 1741.

Madam,

I HOPE I shall now be able to write to your grace with more ease than I have done lately: the last time I

wrote to you I was ill, and my eyes were very painful; but now I am happy in the recovery of my eyes, and have no pain or uneasiness but in my heart, which aches for my dearest friend. It owes you so many days of joy and satisfaction, it cannot repine at paying you those sympathizing hours of anguish, which any misfortune that touches you can require. It will be great joy to me to hear you keep your health, and in some degree recover your tranquillity of mind; indeed the best sentiments of nature require you should grieve; but, at the same time, all precedents and examples of fortune demand that you should again be comforted. The law of nature is indispensable, the commands of necessity unavoidable. A comparison is the measure by which we judge. Look on the misfortunes of others: the present public calamity will afford many examples of unhappiness. How many mothers have here lost the only support of their age, and comforts of their life; and by the very messenger whom they hoped to have heard their sons were honoured and advanced by victory and triumph, they learned they were conquered and murthered, a sacrifice to their country!—even thinks their death a fault; and censure speaks so loudly of the action, the gentle voice of pity does not plead for them; this is indeed a death of horrors, when the aid of reflection, the comfort and assistance of friends, and the interposition of repentance and prayers is far off; when religion and hope do not encourage, but terror and dismay are on every side, with haste and confusion, sad convoy to eternity! Is there (for, my dear duchess, you know the tenderest affections of the nearest relation) so sad a case as that of a parent that loses the promise of many years, the flattering hope of a life of care—their only child? Think, too, how many wives this fatal expedition may have robbed of the happiness and the very support of their beings; having now lost their maintenance and friend together, they are left with their children to all the temptations of want and mean insinuations of poverty. If they can withstand these, how many enemies have they still left to cope with! The outrages of the powerful, the insolence of the rich, scorn of the proud, and malice of the uncharitable, all beating against the broken spirit of the unfortunate. Many unhappy sisters must now be deprived of the friend and guardian of their youth, orphans and unfriended before, with only this relation to support them in a world dangerous and malicious to youth; here they were promised the sincerest friendship under the tenderest name, and perhaps hopeful and ambitious for this their dearest object, have persuaded their brother to this life of hazard, and are now left for ever to repent that which they can never redress. How hard is it to avoid misfortunes for those to whom idleness is improper! Where does ambition, or indeed reasonable industry call, that conscience, honour, or safety, is not sometimes hazarded? This world has much of grief; through life we feel it, and in death we give it, to those whom to defend from it we would have lived or died as best were for their interest. But let us, as far as we can, shorten our sorrow and lengthen our joys; it is our duty to do so; our journey is but short, it is well to be guided in it by patience and accompanied by hope, and it will seem easier; long it can't appear: "We are such stuff as dreams are made of; our little life is bounded by a sleep." I must bid your grace adieu much sooner than I would choose, but lord Rockingham is just arrived, and dinner will be upon table in a moment. If I can keep my eyes in a seeing condition, you shall hear

from me constantly. Lady Oxford, I hope, is not entirely cast down. I am, dear madam, your grace's most obedient, most obliged, faithful, and affectionate servant,

E. ROBINSON.

LETTER X.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Freind.

Bullstrode, Tuesday 24th, 1741.

Two so united in my thoughts shall not be separated in my words; so, my good cousins, accept my salutations from the country. I took leave of our smoky metropolis on Monday morning, and changed the scene for one better suited to the season. The agreeable freedom I live in, and the rural beauties of the place, would persuade me I was in the plains of Arcadia; but the magnificence of the building, under whose gilded roofs I dwell, have a pomp far beyond pastoral. In one thing I fall short of Chloe and Phillis, I have no *Pastor fido*, no languishing Corydon to sigh with the zephyrs, and complain to the murmuring brooks; but those things are unnecessary to a heart taken up, and sufficiently softened by friendship.—Here I know Mrs. Freind and you shake your heads, and think a little *bergerie* a proper amusement for the country; but, in my opinion, friendship is preferable to love. The presence of a friend is delightful, their absence supportable; delicacy without jealousy, and tenderness without weakness, transports without madness, and pleasure without satiety.—No fear that caprice should destroy what reason established; but even time, which perfects friendship, destroys love. I may now say this to you, who, from constant lovers, are become faithful friends. I congratulate your change; to have passed from hope to security, and from admiration to esteem. If you knew the charming friend I am with, you would not wonder at my encomiums upon friendship, which she makes one taste in its greatest perfection. I have greater pleasure in walking in these fine gardens because they are hers; and indeed the place is very delightful. I am sorry to think I have lost so much sunshine in town. Society and coal fires are very proper for frost; but solitude and green trees for summer. Then the *care selve beate** come in season, and Philomel sings sweeter than Farinelli. The beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, are better company than the *beau monde;* and a butterfly and a magpye, in my opinion, are at all times better company than a fop or a coxcomb. It is the necessity of the one to be gaudy, and of the other to chatter; but where folly and foppery are by choice, my contempt must attend the absurdity. I like an owl, very often, better than an alderman; a spaniel better than a courtier; and a hound is more sagacious than a fox-hunter; for a fox-hunter is only the follower of another creature's instinct, and is but a second instrument in the important affair of killing a fox. I could say a great deal more of them, if supper was not ready; so leaving you to balance their merits, and determine their sagacity, I must take my leave, only desiring my compliments to Mrs. Freind and the Doctor; if at his years and wisdom, things so trifling as women and compliments can take any place in his remembrance. Pray let me hear from the writing half very soon; the husband is always allowed to be the head, and I think in your family he is the hand too. A letter directed to Bullstrode, by Gerrard's bag, will

* Dear happy woods.

find and rejoice your most faithful friend and affectionate cousin,

ELIZ. ROBINSON.*

LETTER XI.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Rev. Dr. Shaw, F. R. S., &c. &c.†

Rev. Sir,

You will perhaps think me rather too hasty in my congratulations if I wish you joy of going to be married, whereas it is generally usual to stay till people really are so before we offer to make our compliments. But joy is a very transitory thing; therefore I am willing to seize upon the first occasion: and as I imagine you are glad you are going to be married, I wish you joy of that gladness; for whether you will be glad after you are married is more than mortal wight can determine; and having prepared myself to rejoice with you, I should be loth to defer writing till, perhaps, you were become sorrowful; I must therefore in prudence prevent your espousals. I would not have you imagine I shall treat matrimony in a ludicrous manner; it is impossible for a man, who, alas! has had two wives, to look upon it as a jest, or think it a light thing; indeed it has several advantages over a single life. You, that have made many voyages, know that a tempest is better than a dead calm; and matrimony teaches many excellent lessons, particularly patience and submission, and brings with it all the advantages of reproof, and the great profit of remonstrances. These indeed are only temporal benefits;—but besides, any wife will save you from purgatory, and a diligent one will secure heaven to you. If you would atone for your sins, and do a work meet for repentance, *marry*. Some people wonder how Cupid has been able to wound a person of your prowess; you, who wept not with the crocodile, listened not to the sirens, stared the basilisk in the face, whistled to the rattlesnake, went to the masquerade with Proteus, danced the hays with Scylla and Charybdis, taught the dog of the Nile to fetch and carry, walked cheek-by-jowl with a lion, made an intimacy with a tiger, wrestled with a bear, and, in short, have lived like an owl in the desert, or a pelican in the wilderness; after defying monsters so furious and fell, that you should be overcome by an arrow out of a little urchin's quiver, is amazing! Have you not beheld the mummies of the beauteous Cleopatra, and of the fair consorts of the Ptolemies, without one amorous sigh! And now to fall a victim to a mere modern human widow is most unworthy of you!—What qualities has a woman, that you have not vanquished! Her tears are not more apt to betray than those of the crocodile, she is hardly as deceitful as the Siren, less deadly, I believe, than the basilisk or rattlesnake, scarce as changeable as Proteus, nor more dangerous than Scylla and Charybdis, as docile and faithful as the dog of the Nile, sociable as the lion, and mild, sure, as the tiger! As her qualities are not more deadly than those of the animals you have despised, what is it that has conquered you? Can it be her beauty?—Is she as handsome as the empress of the woods? as well accommodated as the many-chambered sailor? or as skilful as the nautilus? You will find many a creature by earth, air, and water, that is more beautiful

* This letter properly belongs to a former year, and to some previous visit to Bullstrode; but having no other date than Tuesday, 24th, the year cannot be ascertained. The date 1741, is added to recall to the reader the progress of the series.

† This anonymous letter was written by Miss Robinson, and sent to Dr. Shaw, the traveller, at the instigation, and for the amusement of the duchess of Portland and her society.

than a woman; but indeed she is composed of all elements, and,

"Fire, water, woman, are man's ruin,
And great's thy danger, Thomas Bruin."

But you will tell me she has all the beauties in nature united in her person; as ivory in her forehead, diamonds in her eyes, &c.

"But where's the sense, direct or moral,
That teeth are pearl, or lips are coral?"

If she is a dowdy, what can you do with her? If she is a beauty, what will she do for you? A man of your profession might know the lilies of the field toil not, neither do they spin; if she is rich she won't buy you, if she is poor I dont see why she should borrow you. But I fear, I am advising in vain, while your heart, like a fritter, is frying in fat in Cupid's flames. How frail and weak is flesh! else, sure, so much might have kept in one little heart; had Cupid struck the lean, or the melancholy, I had not lamented; but true Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, merry Jack Falstaff, *fat Jack* Falstaff, beware the foul fiend, they call it Marriage, beware on't! As what I have advanced on the subject of matrimony is absolutely unanswerable, I need not tell you where to direct a letter for me, nor will I, in my pride, declare who I am that give you this excellent counsel; but, that you may not despair of knowing where to address your thanks for such an extraordinary favour, I will promise, that before you find a courtier without deceit, a patriot without spleen, a lawyer without quibble, a philosopher without pride, a wit without vanity, a fool without presumption, or any man without conceit, you shall find the true name of your well-wisher and faithful counsellor,

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LETTER XII.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Nov. 5.

Madam,

My heart and hand are too much yours to permit me to employ another's to dictate, or write to your grace, when I am able to do it. I had your letter, for which I am obliged to you: I feel all the sensibility of friendship when I reflect you are unhappy. I hope my lord duke will have no more of the complaint in his stomach. Lady Oxford really knows her remedy, and I hope you will prevail upon her ladyship to go to Bath. I had not any letter from Dr. Sandys, but you know he has always a very tedious labour when he goes of a letter. I wish he was well delivered of this, for I am impatient to know my doom; whether I am to sit here, like Patience on a monument, or may be allowed, in my quondam character of a Fidget, to bustle into the bustling world. My appetite for the country is satisfied, and I should like to see London fine town again; and I shall be a poor wife (pity, but for the verse, it were maiden) forsaken,

"Yet must bear a contented mind,
But when leave of me he has taken,
I can't have another as kind:"

the last line sets forth the melancholy circumstance. As for single ladies, the loss of a lover is nothing; for, as Millamont says, one makes as many as one pleases, and keeps them as long as one pleases; but it is worth while to take care of a good husband, for they are reckoned rarities. I am pretty well at present, but I don't much like this sort of constitution. I believe Sandys would not tell his wife a secret for fear she should go abroad to tell it; and, you know, he loves she should sit, like sober puss in the corner, to offend all those who

would annoy the cheese, or other good things in his cupboard; for, I guess it is from some principle of economy that he keeps her at home.

I am, madam, your grace's faithful, humble servant, E. M.

LETTER XIII.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Allerthorpe, Nov: 19, 1742.

Madam,

WHAT prophets are my fears! they whispered to me your grace was not well, and I find their suggestions were true. Hard state of things, that one may believe one's fears, but cannot rely upon one's hopes! I imagined concern would have an ill effect on your constitution: I know you have many pledges in the hands of fate, and I feared for you, and every thing that was near and dear to you. I am sensible your regard and tenderness for lady Oxford will make you suffer extremely when you see her ill; she has therefore a double portion of my good wishes, on her own and your grace's account. When sensibility of heart and head makes you feel all the outrages that fortune and folly offer, why do you not envy the thoughtless giggle and unmeaning smile? "In Folly's cup still laughs the bubble Joy." Wisdom's cup is often dashed with sorrow, but the nepenthe of stupidity is the only medicine of life; fools neither are troubled with fear nor doubt. What did the wisdom of the wisest man teach him? Verily, that all was vanity and vexation of spirit! A painful lesson fools will never learn, for they are of all vanities most vain. And there is not so sweet a companion as that same vanity; when we go into the world it leads us by the hand; if we retire from it, it follows us; it meets us at court, and finds us in the country; commends the hero that gains the world, and the philosopher that forsakes it; praises the luxury of the prodigal, and the prudence of the penurious; feasts with the voluptuous, fasts with the abstemious, sits on the pen of the author, and visits the paper of the critic; reads dedications, and writes them; makes court to superiors, receives homage of inferiors; in short it is useful, it is agreeable, and the very thing needful to happiness; had Solomon felt some inward vanity, sweet sounds had been ever in his ears without the voices of men-singers, or women-singers; he had not then said of laughter, what is it? and of mirth, what doeth it? Vanity, and a good set of teeth, would have taught him the ends and purposes of laughing, that fame may be acquired by it, where, like the proposal for the grinning wager,

> "The frightfulest grinner
> Is the winner."

Did not we think lady C—— would get nothing by that broad grin but the tooth-ache? But vanity, profitable vanity, was her better counsellor; and as she always imagined the heart of a lover was caught between her teeth, I cannot say his delay is an argument of her charms, or his gallantry, but she has him secure by an old proverb, that what is bred in the bone will never out of the flesh, and no doubt but this love was bred in the bone, even in the jaw-bone. No wonder if tame, weak man, is subdued by that weapon with which Samson killed the mighty lion. Mr. Montagu got well to London on Monday night. I am glad your facetious senator has gone to Parliament, where all his conversation will be yea, yea, and nay, nay; and even of that cometh evil sometimes. Time will not allow me to lengthen this

epistle with any thing more than my sister's compliments to your grace.

I am, madam, yours, &c.

E. M.

LETTER XIV.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland.

Nov. 28, 1742.

Madam,

I AM very sorry I have not received all the letters your grace has been so good as to write to me; Fate received them into her left hand, and I am deprived of them. I am glad to hear your spirits are better; may circling Joys dance round your fire-side,

"With Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides!"

for life is too short to allow for melancholy fears and intruding cares, which are apt to fill up the youthful time, when we are fittest for happiness. Age will bring its solemn train of woe; let us therefore admit all Youth's gay company, smiling Joy, cheerful Mirth, and happy Hope; life's early Hours come dancing along with their fair partner Pleasure; but in the evening of our day they tread a heavy measure, dragging after them weak Infirmity and sad Regret,

"Expense, and after-thought, and idle care,
And doubts of motley hue, and dark despair."

I grieve whenever I think your mind is pained; all infirmities and diseases of the body are nothing compared to anguish of heart. I am now in the highest content; my little brothers are to go to Westminster as soon as the holidays are over, and what adds still to my pleasure in this is, that Jacky's going is owing to Mr. Montagu's intercession for him with my father, who did not design his going to Westminster till next year: our youngest, I believe, is to go out with our new captain. I would give a great deal for a *tête-à-tête* with your grace, *mais helas! ma pauvre tête n'est pas une tête ailée.* It would have been a strange and unnatural thing that Dr. Sandys' letter should have miscarried; my faith has swallowed his advice, and my throat his pills; so I have endured the country and taken his physic, very unpalatable things both. I am pretty well, but I do not like to sit like puss in the corner, all the winter, to watch what may prove a mouse, though I am no mountain. I am rejoiced lady Kinnoul, and the young ladies, are with you. I cannot boast of the numbers that adorn our fire-side; my sister and I are the principal figures! besides, there is a round table, a square skreen, some books, and a work-basket, with a smelling bottle when morality grows musty, or a maxim smells too strong, as sometimes they will in ancient books. I had a letter to-day from Mr. Montagu, in which he flatters me with the hopes of seeing him at Christmas. I hear your grace's porter says you will not leave Welbeck these two months, and Elias is no lying man. I know, full well, however he may deny you by parcels, he will not thus in the gross: so, I imagine, you will not be in London this age, which makes me more contented with being in the country.—My lady Croakledom is croaking on the banks of Styx, where, with Cerberus's barking mouths, and Tisiphone's *belle chevelure* she will make most pleasant melody: with such a noise in his ears how glad would Pluto be if Orpheus would give him a tune once more! Lady Limerick, imagining I came to town with Mr. Montagu, sent an excuse, that being ill, she had not been able to make me a visit. I guess it would raise great speculations why I was not come up, and had you been within question-shot, the good countess had popped off a volley upon you, I make

no doubt. I hear lord Cobham and lord Gower are going to resign; and, I hope, with less regret than I resign my pen; but the letters are sent for. Time is a monarch that commands, as many sovereigns do, to the vexation and detriment of their subjects; therefore to show my loyalty to King Time, I must obey his minister, the hour, that commands my letter hence. My sister desires her compliments.

I am, my dear lady duchess, your most grateful and affectionate

E. MONTAGU.

LETTER XV.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to Mrs. Donnellan.

York, August, 1744.

I AM now writing to you from the very place from whence I began my journey of life. You will think that I may feel some uneasiness on the reflection of returning to this place, after so many years wandering through the world, with so little improvement and addition of merit, which is all that time leaves behind it. Too true it is that reflection has given some pain, and cost me a sigh or two; but it is some comfort that my blank page has not been blotted with the stains of vice; if any good deeds shall ever be written there, they will be legible, and suffer no various interpretations even from critics. Twenty-two years and ten months ago I was just the age my son is now: as his way through life will lie through the high roads of ambition and pleasure, he will hardly pass so unspotted, but, I hope, a better-informed traveller than I have done through my little private path. His account will consist of many articles, pray God the balance may be right! I would have him think joy is for the pure of heart, and not giddily sacrifice the smallest part of integrity in hope of making large amends by deeds of estimation. But thus it is always with his sex, and a man thinks it is no more necessary to be as innocent as a woman, than to be as fair. Poor little man, may Heaven protect him! I wish he may be of as contented a spirit at the same age as his mother; and that his cheerfulness too may arise, not from love of himself, but from the possession of good and amiable friends. I would, to this purpose, wish him as many brothers, but I have some private objections arising from self-love against that wish, so I will leave that to his merit and discernment, which to me has arisen from accident. I ought to have epistolized you before I came so near the end of my journey, but we filled up our time with seeing all the places that lay within our route; the first was Oxford, which you know so well I shall say nothing about it, nor would the Muses permit my grey goose quill to describe their sacred haunt. From thence we went to Stowe, of which so much has been said and written. I shall only tell you how I was affected by the gardens, of which probably neither verse nor prose writer would ever inform you. It is indeed a princely garden, more like, I believe, to that where the sapient king held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse, than to Paradise: its beauties are the effects of expense and taste; the objects you see are various, yet the result is not variety. Lord Cobham has done by his garden as kings do by their subjects, made difference by title and artificial addition, where nature made none; yet altogether it is a pleasing scene, where a philosophic mind would enjoy full happiness, the disappointed ambitious some consolation. The buildings are many of them censured by connoisseurs as bad; however, their intention and use is good; they are, for the most part, dedicated to the memory of the wise, the good, and great; so they

raise in the ambitious a noble emulation, in the humble a virtuous veneration: kinds of homage that mend the heart that pays them. From Stowe we went to my brother Montagu's in Leicestershire, where we passed a week very agreeably. The next place we saw was T——; the house is large, but the company it has of late received makes one see it with prejudice; the luxury of a hogstye must be disgustful; indeed I was glad to get out of the house, every creature in it, and every thing one saw was displeasing; as to the park, it wants nature's cheerful livery, the sprightly green; the famous cascade did not please me, who have seen some made by the bounteous hand of Nature, to which man's magnificence is poor and *chetive*. From hence we came to York, where we have just been viewing the cathedral; of all the gothic buildings I ever saw, the most noble, taken together, or considered in parts. Gothic architecture, like gothic government, seems to make strength and power of resistance its chief pride; this noble cathedral looks as if it might defy the consuming power of all-devouring Time. We are to visit the fine assembly room before we leave York, which, I hear, is built in the manner of an Egyptian hall, or banqueting-room. Dr. Shaw would tell us in what place Cleopatra would have chosen to sit. I must put an end to my letter, which has been something in the style of the raree-showman, "you shall see what you shall see." I am, dear madam, your most sincere and faithful humble servant, E. MONTAGU.

LETTER XVI.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of ——.

Rotterdam, Aug. 3, O. S. 1716.

I FLATTER myself (dear sister) that I shall give you some pleasure in letting you know that I have safely passed the sea, though we had the ill fortune of a storm. We were persuaded by the captain of the yacht to set out in a calm, and he pretended there was nothing so easy as to tide it over; but, after two days slowly moving, the wind blew so hard, that none of the sailors could keep their feet, and we were all Sunday night tossed very handsomely. I never saw a man more frighted than the captain. For my part, I have been so lucky neither to suffer from fear nor sea-sickness; though, I confess, I was so impatient to see myself once more upon dry land, that I would not stay till the yacht could get to Rotterdam, but went in the long-boat to Helvoetsluys, where we had *voitures* to carry us to the Briel. I was charmed with the neatness of that little town; but my arrival at Rotterdam presented me a new scene of pleasure. All the streets are paved with broad stones, and before many of the meanest artificer's doors are placed seats of various coloured marbles, so neatly kept, that, I'll assure you, I walked almost all over the town yesterday, *incognito*, in my slippers, without receiving one spot of dirt; and you may see the Dutch maids washing the pavement of the street, with more application than ours do our bed-chambers. The town seems so full of people, with such busy faces all in motion, that I can hardly fancy it is not some celebrated fair; but I see it is every day the same. It is certain no town can be more advantageously situated for commerce. Here are seven large canals, on which the merchant ships come up to the very doors of their houses. The shops and warehouses are of a surprising neatness and magnificence, filled with an incredible quantity of fine merchandize, and so much cheaper than what we see in England, that I have much ado to persuade myself that I am still so

near it. Here is neither dirt nor beggary to be seen. One is not shocked with those loathsome cripples, so common in London, nor teased with the importunity of idle fellows and wenches, that choose to be nasty and lazy. The common servants and little shop-women here are more nicely clean than most of our ladies, and the great variety of neat dresses (every woman dressing her head after her own fashion) is an additional pleasure in seeing the town. You see, hitherto, I make no complaints, dear sister, and if I continue to like travelling as well as I do at present, I shall not repent my project. It will go a great way in making me satisfied with it, if it affords me an opportunity of entertaining you. But it is not from Holland that you must expect a disinterested offer. I can write enough in the style of Rotterdam, to tell you plainly, in one word, that I expect returns of all the London news. You see I have already learnt to make a good bargain, and that it is not for nothing I will so much as tell you I am your affectionate sister.

LETTER XVII.

Lady Mary W. Montague to Mrs. S——.

Hague, Aug. 5, O. S. 1716.

I MAKE haste to tell you, dear madam, that after all the dreadful fatigues you threatened me with, I am hitherto very well pleased with my journey. We take care to make such short stages every day, that I rather fancy myself upon parties of pleasure than upon the road, and sure nothing can be more agreeable than travelling in Holland. The whole country appears a large garden; the roads are well paved, shaded on each side with rows of trees, and bordered with large canals, full of boats passing and repassing. Every twenty paces gives you the prospect of some villa, and every four hours that of a large town, so surprisingly neat, I am sure you would be charmed with them. The place I am now at is certainly one of the finest villages in the world. Here are several squares finely built, and (what I think a particular beauty) the whole set with thick large trees. The *Voor-hout* is, at the same time, the Hyde Park and Mall of the people of quality; for they take the air in it both on foot and in coaches. There are shops for wafers, cool liquors, &c. I have been to see several of the most celebrated gardens, but I will not tease you with their descriptions. I dare swear you think my letter already long enough. But I must not conclude without begging your pardon, for not obeying your commands, in sending the lace you ordered me. Upon my word, I can yet find none, that is not dearer than you may buy it in London. If you want any India goods, here are great variety of pennyworths, and I shall follow your orders with great pleasure and exactness, being, dear madam, &c. &c.

LETTER XVIII.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mrs. S. C.

Nimeguen, Aug. 13, O. S. 1716.

I AM extremely sorry, my dear S., that your fears of disobliging your relations, and their fears for your health and safety, have hindered me from enjoying the happiness of your company, and you the pleasure of a diverting journey. I receive some degree of mortification from every agreeable novelty, or pleasing prospect, by the reflection of your having so unluckily missed the delight which I know it would have given you. If you were with me in this

town, you would be ready to expect to receive visits from your Nottingham friends. No two places were ever more resembling; one has but to give the Maese the name of the Trent, and there is no distinguishing the prospect. The houses, like those of Nottingham, are built one above another, and are intermixed, in the same manner, with trees and gardens. The tower, they call Julius Cæsar's, has the same situation with Nottingham Castle; and I cannot help fancying I see from it the Trent field, Adboulton, places so well known to us. It is true, the fortifications make a considerable difference. All the learned in the art of war bestow great commendations on them; for my part, that know nothing of the matter, I shall content myself with telling you, it is a very pretty walk on the ramparts, on which there is a tower, very deservedly called the Belvidere, where people go to drink coffee, tea, &c. and enjoy one of the finest prospects in the world. The public walks have no great beauty, but the thick shade of the trees, which is solemnly delightful. But I must not forget to take notice of the bridge, which appeared very surprising to me. It is large enough to hold hundreds of men, with horses and carriages.—They give the value of an English two-pence to get upon it, and then away they go, bridge and all, to the other side of the river, with so slow a motion, one is hardly sensible of any at all. I was yesterday at the French church and stared very much at their manner of service. The parson clapped on a broad-brimmed hat, in the first place, which gave him entirely the air of what d'ye call him, in Bartholomew fair, which he kept up by extraordinary antic gestures, and preaching much such stuff as t'other talked to the puppets. However, the congregation seemed to receive it with great devotion; and I was informed, by some of his flock, that he is a person of particular fame amongst them. I believe by this time you are as much tired with my account of him, as I was with his sermon; but I am sure your brother will excuse a digression in favour of the church of England. You know, speaking disrespectfully of the Calvinists, is the same thing as speaking honourably of the church. Adieu, my dear S., always remember me, and be assured I can never forget you, &c. &c.

LETTER XIX.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Lady ———.

Cologne, Aug. 16, O: S. 1716.

If my lady ——— could have any notion of the fatigues that I have suffered these two last days, I am sure she would own it a great proof of regard that I now sit down to write to her. We hired horses from Nimeguen hither, not having the conveniency of the post, and found but very indifferent accommodations at Reinberg, our first stage; but it was nothing to what I suffered yesterday. We were in hopes to reach Cologne; our horses tired at Stamel, three hours from it, where I was forced to pass the night in my clothes, in a room not better than a hovel; for though I have my bed with me, I had no mind to undress where the wind came from a thousand places. We left this wretched lodging at day break, and about six this morning, came safe here, where I got immediately into bed. I slept so well for three hours, that I found myself perfectly recovered, and have had spirits enough to go and see all that is curious in the town; that is to say, the churches, for here is nothing else worth seeing. This is a very large town, but the most part of it is old built. The Jesuit's church, which is

the neatest, was showed me, in a very complaisant manner, by a handsome young Jesuit; who, not knowing who I was, took a liberty in his compliments and railleries, which very much diverted me, having never before seen any thing of that nature. I could not enough admire the magnificence of the altars, the rich images of the saints (all massy silver), and the enchasures of the relics, though I could not help murmuring, in my heart, at the profusion of pearls, diamonds, and rubies, bestowed on the adornment of rotten teeth and dirty rags. I own that I had wickedness enough to covet St. Ursula's pearl necklace; though perhaps this was no wickedness at all, an image not being certainly one's neighbour; but I went yet farther, and wished the wench herself converted into dressing plate. I should also gladly see converted into silver, a great St. Christopher, which I imagine would look very well in a cistern. These were my pious reflections; though I was well satisfied to see, piled up to the honour of our nation, the skulls of the Eleven Thousand Virgins. I have seen some hundreds of relics here of no less consequence; but I will not imitate the common style of travellers so far as to give you a list of them, being persuaded that you have no manner of curiosity for the titles given to jaw bones and bits of wormeaten wood. Adieu, I am just going to supper, where I shall drink your health in an admirable sort of Lorrain wine, which I am sure is the same you call Burgundy in London, &c. &c.

LETTER XX.

Lady Mary W. Montague to Mrs. P——.

Ratisbon, Aug. 30, O. S. 1716.

I HAD the pleasure of receiving yours but the day before I left London. I give you a thousand thanks for your good wishes, and have such an opinion of their efficacy, that I am persuaded I owe, in part, to them the good luck of having proceeded so far on my long journey without any ill accident. For I do not reckon it any to have been stopped a few days in this town by a cold, since it has not only given me an opportunity of seeing all that is curious in it, but of making some acquaintance with the ladies, who have all been to see me with great civility, particularly madame ——, the wife of our king's envoy from Hanover. She has carried me to all the assemblies; and I have been magnificently entertained at her house, which is one of the finest here. You know that all the nobility of this place are envoys from different states. Here are a great number of them; and they might pass their time agreeably enough, if they were less delicate on the point of ceremony. But instead of joining in the design of making the town as pleasant to one another as they can, and improving their little societies, they amuse themselves no other way than with perpetual quarrels, which they take care to eternise, by leaving them to their successors; and an envoy to Ratisbon receives, regularly, half a dozen quarrels, among the perquisites of his employment. You may be sure the ladies are not wanting, on their side, in cherishing and improving these important piques, which divide the town almost into as many parties as there are families. They choose rather to suffer the mortification of sitting almost alone on their assembly nights, than to recede one jot from their pretensions. I have not been here above a week, and yet I have heard from almost every one of them, the whole history of their wrongs, and dreadful complaints of the injustice of their neighbours, in hopes to draw me to their party.

But I think it very prudent to remain neuter, though if I was to stay amongst them, there would be no possibility of continuing so, their quarrels running so high, that they will not be civil to those that visit their adversaries. The foundation of these everlasting disputes turns entirely upon rank, place, and the title of Excellency, which they all pretend to, and, what is very hard, will give it to nobody. For my part, I could not forbear advertising them (for the public good) to give the title of Excellency to every body, which would include the receiving it from every body; but the very mention of such a dishonourable peace was received with as much indignation as Mrs. Blackaire did the motion of a reference. And, indeed, I began to think myself ill natured, to offer to take from them, in a town where there are so few diversions, so entertaining an amusement. I know that my peaceable disposition already gives me a very ill figure, and that it is publicly whispered as a piece of impertinent pride in me, that I have hitherto been saucily civil to every body, as if I thought nobody good enough to quarrel with. I should be obliged to change my behaviour, if I did not intend to pursue my journey in a few days. I have been to see the churches here, and had the permission of touching the relics, which was never suffered in places where I was not known. I had by this privilege, the opportunity of making an observation which I doubt not might have been made in all the other churches, that the emeralds and rubies which they show round their relics and images are most of them false; though they tell you that many of the crosses and madonas, set round with these stones, have been the gifts of emperors and other great princes. I do not doubt indeed but they were at first jewels of value; but the good fathers have found it convenient to apply them to other uses, and the people are just as well satisfied with bits of glass amongst these relics. They showed me a prodigious claw set in gold, which they called the claw of a griffin, and I could not forbear asking the reverend priest that showed it, whether the griffin was a saint? The question almost put him beside his gravity; but he answered, they only kept it as a curiosity. I was very much scandalized at a large silver image of the Trinity, where the Father is represented under the figure of a decrepit old man, with a beard down to his knees, and triple crown on his head, holding in his arms the Son, fixed on the cross, and the Holy Ghost, in the shape of a dove, hovering over him. Madame —— is come this minute to call me to the assembly, and forces me to tell you very abruptly, that I am ever your, &c &c.

LETTER XXI.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mr. P——

Vienna, Sept. 14, O. S.

PERHAPS you will laugh at me, for thanking you very gravely for all the obliging concern you express for me. It is certain that I may, if I please, take the fine things you say to me for wit and raillery, and, it may be, it would be taking them right. But I never, in my life, was half so well disposed to take you in earnest as I am at present, and that distance which makes the continuation of your friendship improbable, has very much increased my faith in it. I find that I have (as well as the rest of my sex), whatever face I set on it, a strong disposition to believe in miracles. Do not fancy, however, that I am infected by the air of these popish countries; I have, indeed, so far wandered from the discipline of

the church of England, as to have been last Sunday at the opera, which was performed in the garden of the Favorita, and I was so much pleased with it, I have not repented my seeing it. Nothing of that kind ever was more magnificent; and I can easily believe, what I am told, that the decorations and habits cost the emperor thirty thousand pounds sterling. The stage was built over a very large canal, and at the beginning of the second act, divided into two parts, discovering the water, on which there immediately came, from different parts, two fleets of little gilded vessels, that gave the representation of a naval fight. It is not easy to imagine the beauty of this scene, which I took particular notice of. But all the rest were perfectly fine in their kind. The story of the opera is the enchantment of Alcina, which gives opportunities for great variety of machines and changes of scenes, which are performed with a surprising swiftness. The theatre is so large that it is hard to carry the eye to the end of it, and the habits in the utmost magnificence, to the number of one hundred and eight. No house can hold such large decorations; but the ladies all sitting in the open air, exposes them to great inconveniences; for there is but one canopy for the imperial family; and the first night it was represented, a shower of rain happening, the opera was broke off, and the company crowded away in such confusion, that I was almost squeezed to death. But if their operas are thus delightful, their comedies are, in as high a degree, ridiculous. They have but one playhouse, where I had the curiosity to go to a German comedy, and was very glad it happened to be the story of Amphitryon. As that subject has been already handled by a Latin, French, and English poet, I was curious to see what an Austrian author would make of it. I understand enough of that language to comprehend the greatest part of it, and besides I took with me a lady that had the goodness to explain to me every word. The way is to take a box, which holds four, for yourself and company. The fixed price is a gold ducat. I thought the house very low and dark; but I confess the comedy admirably recompensed that defect. I never laughed so much in my life. It began with Jupiter's falling in love out of a peep-hole in the clouds, and ended with the birth of Hercules. But what was most pleasant was, the use Jupiter made of his metamorphosis; for you no sooner saw him under the figure of Amphitryon, but instead of flying to Alcmena, with the raptures Mr. Dryden puts into his mouth, he sends for Amphitryon's tailor, and cheats him of a laced coat, and his banker of a bag of money, a Jew of a diamond ring, and bespeaks a great supper in his name; and the greatest part of the comedy turns upon poor Amphitryon's being tormented by these people for their debts. Mercury uses Sosia in the same manner. But I could not easily pardon the liberty the poet has taken of larding his play with, not only indecent expressions, but such gross words as I do not think our mob would suffer from a mountebank. Besides, the two Sosias very fairly let down their breeches in the direct view of the boxes, which were full of people of the first rank that seemed very well pleased with their entertainment, and assured me this was a celebrated piece. I shall conclude my letter with this remarkable relation, very well worthy the serious consideration of Mr. Collier. I will not trouble you with farewell compliments, which I think generally as impertinent as curtsies at leaving a room when the visit has been too long already.

LETTER XXII.

Lady Mary W. Montague to the Lady R——.

Vienna, Sept. 20, 1716, O. S.

I AM extremely rejoiced, but not at all surprised, at the long, delightful letter you have had the goodness to send me. I know that you can think of an absent friend even in the midst of a court, and you love to oblige, where you can have no view of a return; and I expect from you that you should love me, and think of me when you do not see me. I have compassion for the mortifications, that you tell me befel our little old friend; and I pity her much more, since I know that they are only owing to the barbarous customs of our country. Upon my word, if she were here, she would have no other fault but that of being something too young for the fashion, and she has nothing to do but to transplant herself hither about seven years hence, to be again a young and blooming beauty. I can assure you that wrinkles, or a small stoop in the shoulders, nay even grey hairs, are no objection to the making new conquests. I know you cannot easily figure to yourself a young fellow of five-and-twenty ogling my lady S-ff—k with passion, or pressing to hand the countess of O———d from an opera. But such are the sights I see every day, and I do not perceive any body surprised at them but myself. A woman till five-and-thirty is only looked upon as a raw girl, and can possibly make no noise in the world till about forty. I do not know what your ladyship may think of this matter, but it is a considerable comfort to me to know there is upon earth such a paradise for old women; and I am content to be insignificant at present, in the design of returning when I am fit to appear no where else. I cannot help lamenting on this occasion the pitiful case of too many English ladies, long since retired to prudery and ratifia, whom if their stars had luckily conducted hither, would still shine in the first rank of beauties.

LETTER XXIII.

From Lady M. W. Montague to Mrs. J——.

Vienna, Sept. 26, O. S. 1716.

I WAS never more agreeably surprised than by your obliging letter.—It is a peculiar mark of my esteem, that I tell you so; and I can assure you, that if I loved you one grain less than I do, I should be very sorry to see it so diverting as it is. The mortal aversion I have to writing makes me tremble at the thoughts of a new correspondent; and I believe I disobliged no less than a dozen of my London acquaintance by refusing to hear from them, though I did verily think they intended to send me very entertaining letters. But I had rather lose the pleasure of reading several witty things, than be forced to write many stupid ones. Yet, in spite of these considerations, I am charmed with the proof of your friendship, and beg a continuation of the same goodness, though I fear the dullness of this will make you immediately repent of it. It is not from Austria that one can write with vivacity, and I am already infected with the phlegm of the country. Even their amours and their quarrels are carried on with a surprising temper, and they are never lively but upon points of ceremony. There, I own, they show all their passions; and it is not long since two coaches meeting in a narrow street at night, the ladies in them not being able to adjust the ceremonial of which should go back, sat there with equal gallantry till two in the morning, and were both so fully determined to die upon the spot rather than yield, in a point of that importance,

that the street would never have been cleared till their deaths, if the emperor had not sent his guards to part them; and even then they refused to stir, till the expedient could be found out, of taking them both out in chairs exactly in the same moment. After the ladies were agreed, it was with some difficulty that the *pas* was decided between the two coachmen, no less tenacious of their rank than the ladies. This passion is so omnipotent in the breasts of the women, that even their husbands never die, but they are ready to break their hearts, because that fatal hour puts an end to their rank, no widows having any place at Vienna. The men are not much less touched with this point of honour; and they do not only scorn to marry, but even to make love to any woman of a family not as illustrious as their own, and the pedigree is much more considered by them, than either the complexion or features of their mistresses. Happy are the shes that can number amongst their ancestors counts of the empire; they have neither occasion for beauty, money, nor good conduct to get them husbands. It is true, as to money, it is seldom any advantage to the man they marry; the laws of Austria confine the woman's portion to two thousand florins (about two hundred pounds English), and whatever they have beside, remains in their own possession and disposal. Thus here are many ladies much richer than their husbands, who are however obliged to allow them pin-money agreeable to their quality; and I attribute to this considerable branch of prerogative the liberty that they take upon other occasions. I am sure you, that know my laziness and extreme indifference on this subject, will pity me, entangled amongst all these ceremonies, which are a wonderful burthen to me, though I am the envy of the whole town, having by their own customs the *pas* before them all. They, indeed, so revenge upon the poor envoys this great respect shown to ambassadors, that (with all my indifference) I should be very uneasy to suffer it. Upon days of ceremony they have no entrance at court, and on other days must content themselves with walking after every soul, and being the very last taken notice of. But I must write a volume to let you know all the ceremonies, and I have already said too much on so dull a subject, which however employs the whole care of the people here. I need not, after this, tell you how agreeably time slides away with me; you know as well as I do the taste of yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XXIV.

From Lady M. W. Montague to Mr. ——.

Vienna, Oct. 16, O. S. 1716.

I DESERVE not all the reproaches you make me. If I have been some time without answering your letter, it is not that I do not know how many thanks are due to you for it, or that I am stupid enough to prefer any amusements to the pleasure of hearing from you; but after the professions of esteem you have so obligingly made me, I cannot help delaying, as long as I can, showing you that you are mistaken. If you are sincere, when you say you expect to be extremely entertained by my letters, I ought to be mortified at the disappointment that I am sure you will receive when you hear from me; though I have done my best endeavours to find out something worth writing to you. I have seen every thing that was to be seen, with a very diligent curiosity. Here are some fine villas, particularly the late prince of Lichtenstein's; but the statues are all modern, and the pictures not of the first hands. It is true, the empe-

ror has some of great value. I was yesterday to see the repository, which they call his Treasure, where they seem to have been more diligent in amassing a great quantity of things than in the choice of them. I spent bove five hours there, and yet there were very few things that stopped me long to consider them. But the number is prodigious, being a very long gallery filled on both sides, and five large rooms. There is a vast quantity of paintings, amongst which are many fine miniatures; but the most valuable pictures are a few of Correggio, those of Titian being at the Favorita.

The cabinet of jewels did not appear to me so rich as I expected to see it. They showed me there a cup, about the size of a tea-dish, of one entire emerald, which they had so particular a respect for, that only the emperor has the liberty of touching it. There is a large cabinet full of curiosities of clock-work, only one of which I thought worth observing, that was a craw-fish, with all the motions so natural that it was hard to distinguish it from the life.

The next cabinet was a large collection of agates, some of them extremely beautiful and of uncommon size, and several vases of lapis lazuli. I was surprised to see the cabinet of medals so poorly furnished; I did not remark one of any value, and they are kept in a most ridiculous disorder. As to the antiques, very few of them deserve that name. Upon my saying they were modern, I could not forbear laughing at the answer of the profound antiquary that showed them, that they were ancient enough, for to his knowledge they had been there these forty years; but the next cabinet diverted me yet better, being nothing else but a parcel of wax babies, and toys in ivory, very well worthy to be presented children of five years old. Two of the rooms were wholly filled with these trifles of all kinds, set in jewels, amongst which I was desired to observe a crucifix, that they assured me had spoke very wisely to the emperor Leopold. I will not trouble you with a catalogue of the rest of the lumber, but I must not forget to mention a small piece of loadstone, that held up an anchor of steel too heavy for me to lift. This is what I thought most curious in the whole treasure. There are some few heads of ancient statues; but several of them are defaced by modern additions. I foresee that you will be very little satisfied with this letter; and I dare hardly ask you to be good-natured enough to charge the dullness of it on the barrenness of the subject, and to overlook the stupidity of your, &c. &c.

LETTER XXV.

From Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of ——.

Prague, Nov. 17, O. S. 1716.

I HOPE my dear sister wants no new proof of my sincere affection for her; but I am sure if you do, I could not give you a stronger than writing at this time, after three days, or more properly speaking, three nights and days, hard post travelling.—The kingdom of Bohemia is the most desert of any I have seen in Germany. The villages are so poor, and the post-houses so miserable, that clean straw and fair water are blessings not always to be met with, and better accommodation not to be hoped for. Though I carried my own bed with me, I could not sometimes find a place to set it up in; and I rather chose to travel all night, as cold as it is, wrapped up in my furs, than go into the common stoves, which are filled with a mixture of all sorts of ill scents.

This town was once the royal seat of the Bohemian king, and is still the capital of the kingdom. There are yet some remains of its ancient splendour, being one of the largest towns in Germany, but, for the most part, old built and thinly inhabited, which makes the houses very cheap. Those people of quality, who cannot easily bear the expense of Vienna, choose to reside here, where they have assemblies, music, and all other diversions (those of a court excepted), at very moderate rates, all things here being in great abundance, especially the best wild-fowl I ever tasted. I have already been visited by some of the most considerable ladies, whose relations I know at Vienna. They are dressed after the fashions there, after the manner that the people at Exeter imitate those of London: that is, their imitation is more excessive than the original. It is not easy to describe what extraordinary figures they make. The person is so much lost between head-dress and petticoat, that they have as much occasion to write upon their backs, "This is a woman," for the information of travellers, as ever sign-post painter had to write, "This is a bear." I will not forget to write to you again from Dresden and Leipzig, being much more solicitous to content your curiosity, than to indulge my own repose. I am, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

From Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of ——.

Leipzig, Nov. 21, O. S. 1716.

I BELIEVE, dear sister, you will easily forgive my not writing to you from Dresden, as I promised, when I tell you that I never went out of my chaise from Prague to this place. You may imagine how heartily I was tired with twenty-four hours post-travelling, without sleep or refreshment (for I can never sleep in a coach, however fatigued). We passed by moonshine the frightful precipices that divide Bohemia from Saxony, at the bottom of which runs the river Elbe; but I cannot say that I had reason to fear drowning in it, being perfectly convinced, that in case of a tumble, it was utterly impossible to come alive to the bottom. In many places the road is so narrow, that I could not discern an inch of space between the wheels and the precipice. Yet I was so good a wife not to wake Mr. W——y, who was fast asleep by my side, to make him share in my fears, since the danger was unavoidable, till I perceived by the bright light of the moon, our postillions nodding on horseback, while the horses were on the full gallop. Then indeed I thought it very convenient to call out to desire them to look where they were going. My calling waked Mr. W——y, and he was much more surprised than myself at the situation we were in, and assured me, that he passed the Alps five times in different places, without ever having gone a road so dangerous. I have been told since, that it is common to find the bodies of travellers in the Elbe; but, thank God, that was not our destiny, and we came safe to Dresden, so much tired with fear and fatigue, it was not possible for me to compose myself to write. After passing these dreadful rocks, Dresden appeared to me a wonderfully agreeable situation, in a fine large plain on the banks of the Elbe. I was very glad to stay there a day to rest myself. The town is the neatest I have seen in Germany; most of the houses are new built; the elector's palace is very handsome, and his repository full of curiosities of different kinds, with a collection of medals very much esteemed. Sir ——, our king's envoy, came to see me here, and madame de L——, whom

I knew in London, when her husband was minister to the king of Poland there. She offered me all things in her power to entertain me, and brought some ladies with her, whom she presented to me. The Saxon ladies resemble the Austrian no more than the Chinese do those of London: they are very genteelly dressed after the English and French modes, and have, generally, pretty faces, but they are the most determined *minaudieres* in the whole world; they would think it a mortal sin against good-breeding, if they either spoke or moved in a natural manner. They all affect a little soft lisp, and a pretty pitty-pat step; which female frailties ought, however, to be forgiven them, in favour of their civility and good-nature to strangers, which I have a great deal of reason to praise.

The countess of Cozelle is kept prisoner in a melancholy castle, some leagues from hence; and I cannot forbear telling you what I have heard of her, because it seems to me very extraordinary, though I foresee I shall swell my letter to the size of a packet.—She was mistress to the king of Poland (elector of Saxony), with so absolute a dominion over him, that never any lady had so much power in that court. They tell a pleasant story of his majesty's first declaration of love, which he made in a visit to her, bringing in one hand a bag of a hundred thousand crowns, and in the other a horse-shoe, which he snapped asunder before her face, leaving her to draw the consequences of such remarkable proofs of strength and liberality. I know not which charmed her most, but she consented to leave her husband, and to give herself up to him entirely, being divorced publicly in such a manner as by their laws permits either party to marry again. God knows whether it was at this time, or in some other fond fit, but it is certain the king had the weakness to make her a formal contract of marriage; which, though it could signify nothing during the life of the queen, pleased her so well, that she could not be contented without telling it to all the people she saw, and giving herself the airs of a queen. Men endure every thing while they are in love; but when the excess of passion was cooled by long possession, his majesty began to reflect on the ill consequences of leaving such a paper in her hands, and desired to have it restored him. But she rather chose to endure all the most violent effects of his anger than give it up; and though she is one of the richest and most avaricious ladies of her country she has refused the offer of the continuation of a large pension, and the security of a vast sum of money she has amassed, and has at last provoked the king to confine her person to a castle, where she endures all the terrors of a straight imprisonment, and remains still inflexible either to threats or promises. Her violent passions have brought her indeed into fits; which it is supposed will soon put an end to her life. I cannot forbear having some compassion for a woman that suffers for a point of honour, however mistaken, especially in a country where points of honour are not over scrupulously observed among ladies.

I could have wished Mr. W——y's business had permitted him a longer stay at Dresden.

Perhaps I am partial to a town where they profess the Protestant religion, but every thing seemed to me with quite another way of politeness than I have found in other places. *Leipsic*, where I am at present, is a town very considerable for its trade, and I take this opportunity of buying pages' liveries, gold stuffs for myself, &c.; all things of that kind being at least double the price at Vienna, partly because of the excessive customs, and partly through want of

genius and industry in the people, who make no one sort of thing there, so that the ladies are obliged to send even for their shoes out of Saxony. The fair here is one of the most considerable in Germany, and the resort of all the people of quality, as well as of the merchants. This is also a fortified town; but I avoid ever mentioning fortifications, being sensible that I know not how to speak of them. I am the more easy under my ignorance, when I reflect that I am sure you will willingly forgive the omission; for if I made you the most exact description of all the ravelins and bastions I see in my travels, I dare swear you will ask me what is a ravelin? and what is a bastion?—Adieu, my dear sister.

LETTER XXVII.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of ——.

Brunswick, Nov. 23, O. S. 1716.

I AM just come to Brunswick, a very old town, but which has the advantage of being the capital of the duke of Wolfenbuttle's dominions, a family (not to speak of its ancient honours) illustrious by having its younger branch on the throne of England, and having given two empresses to Germany. I have not forgot to drink your health here in mum, which I think very well deserves its reputation of being the best in the world. This letter is the third I have writ to you during my journey; and I declare to you, that if you do not send me immediately a full and true account of all the changes and chances amongst our London acquaintance, I will not write you any description of Hanover (where I hope to be to-night), though I know you have more curiosity to hear of that place than any other.

LETTER XXVIII.

From Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of B.

Hanover, Nov. 25, O. S. 1716.

I RECEIVED your ladyship's letter but the day before I left Vienna, though, by the date, I ought to have had it much sooner; but nothing was ever worse regulated than the post in most parts of Germany. I can assure you, the packet at Prague was behind my chaise, and in that manner conveyed to Dresden, so that the secrets of half the country were at my mercy, if I had had any curiosity for them. I would not longer delay my thanks for yours, though the number of my acquaintances here, and my duty of attending at court, leave me hardly any time to dispose of. I am extremely pleased that I can tell you, without flattery or partiality, that our young prince has all the accomplishments that it is possible to have at his age, with an air of sprightliness and understanding, and something so very engaging and easy in his behaviour, that he needs not the advantage of his rank to appear charming. I had the honour of a long conversation with him last night, before the king came in. His governor retired on purpose (as he told me afterwards) that I might make some judgment of his genius, by hearing him speak without constraint; and I was surprised at the quickness and politeness that appeared in every thing he said, joined to a person perfectly agreeable, and the fine fair hair of the princess.

This town is neither large nor handsome: but the palace is capable of holding a much greater court than that of St. James's. The king has had the goodness to appoint us a lodging in one part of it, without which we should have been very ill accommodated; for the vast number of English crowds the town so much, it is

very good luck to get one sorry room in a miserable tavern. I dined today with the Portuguese ambassador, who thinks himself very happy to have two wretched parlours in an inn. I have now made the tour of Germany, and cannot help observing a considerable difference between travelling here and in England. One sees none of those fine seats of noblemen, so common among us, nor any thing like a country-gentleman's house, though they have many situations perfectly fine. But the whole people are divided into absolute sovereignties, where all the riches and magnificence are at court, or into communities of merchants, such as Nuremberg and Frankfort, where they live always in town for the convenience of trade. The king's company of French comedians play here every night. They are very well dressed, and some of them not ill actors. His majesty dines and sups constantly in public. The court is very numerous, and his affability and goodness make it one of the most agreeable places in the world. Dear madam, your L. &c. &c.

LETTER XXIX.

Lady Mary W. Montague to the Lady R——.

Hanover, Oct. 1, O. S. 1716.

I AM very glad, my dear lady R——, that you have been so well pleased, as you tell me, at the report of my returning to England; though, like other pleasures, I can assure you it has no real foundation. I hope you know me enough to take my word against any report concerning me. It is true, as to distance of place, I am much nearer to London than I was some weeks ago; but as to the thoughts of a return, I never was farther off in my life. I own, I could with great joy indulge the pleasing hopes of seeing you and the very few others that share my esteem; but while Mr. W——— is determined to proceed in his design, I am determined to follow him. I am running on upon my own affairs, that is to say, I am going to write very dully, as most people do when they write of themselves. I will make haste to change the disagreeable subject, by telling you, that I am now got into the region of beauty. All the women have, literally, rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eyebrows, and scarlet lips, to which they generally add coal-black hair. Those perfections never leave them till the hour of their deaths, and have a fine effect by candle-light; but I could wish they were handsome with a little more variety. They resemble one another as much as Mrs. Salmon's court of Great Britain, and are in as much danger of melting away, by too near approaching the fire, which they, for that reason, carefully avoid, though it is now such excessive cold weather, that I believe they suffer extremely by that piece of self-denial. The snow is already very deep, and the people begin to slide about in their *traineaus*. This is a favourite diversion all over Germany. They are little machines fixed upon a sledge, that hold a lady and a gentleman, and are drawn by one horse. The gentleman has the honour of driving, and they move with a prodigious swiftness. The lady, the horse, and the *traineau*, are all as fine as they can be made; and when there are many of them together, it is a very agreeable show. At Vienna, where all pieces of magnificence are carried to excess, there are sometimes machines of this kind, that cost five or six hundred pounds English. The duke of Wolfenbuttle is now at this court: you know he is nearly related to our king, and uncle to the reigning empress, who is,

I believe, the most beautiful princess upon earth. She is now with child, which is all the consolation of the imperial court for the loss of the archduke. I took my leave of her the day before I left Vienna, and she began to speak to me with so much grief and tenderness of the death of that young prince, I had much ado to withhold my tears. You know that I am not at all partial to people for their titles; but I own that I love that charming princess (if I may use so familiar an expression); and if I had not, I should have been very much moved at the tragical end of an only son, born after being so long desired, and at length killed by want of good management, weaning him in the beginning of the winter. Adieu, dear lady R——, continue to write to me, and believe none of your goodness is lost upon your, &c.

LETTER XXX.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mr. Pope.

Vienna, Jan. 16, O. S. 1717.

I HAVE not time to answer your letter, being in all the hurry of preparing for my journey; but I think I ought to bid adieu to my friends with the same solemnity as if I was going to mount a breach, at least, if I am to believe the information of the people here, who denounce all sorts of terrors to me; and, indeed, the weather is at present such, as very few ever set out in. I am threatened, at the same time, with being frozen to death, buried in the snow, and taken by the Tartars, who ravage that part of Hungary I am to pass. It is true, we shall have a considerable *escorte*, so that possibly I may be diverted with a new scene, by finding myself in the midst of a battle. How my adventures will conclude, I leave entirely to Providence; if comically, you shall hear of them.——Pray be so good as to tell Mr. ——— I have received his letter. Make him my adieus; if I live, I will answer it. The same compliment to my lady R——.

LETTER XXXI.

*Dr. Johnson to Mr. Elphinston.**

Sept. 25, 1750.

Dear sir,

You have, as I find, by every kind of evidence, lost an excellent mother, and I hope you will not think me incapable of partaking of your grief. I have a mother now eighty-two years of age, whom therefore I must soon lose, unless it please God that she rather should mourn for me. I read the letters in which you relate your mother's death to Mr. Strahan; and think I do myself honour when I tell you that I read them with tears; but tears are neither to me nor to you of any farther use, when once the tribute of nature has been paid. The business of life summons us away from useless grief, and calls us to the exercise of those virtues of which we are lamenting our deprivation. The greatest benefit, which one friend can confer upon another, is to guard, and incite, and elevate his virtues. This your mother will still perform if you diligently preserve the memory of her life, and of her death: a life, so far as I can learn, useful, wise, and innocent; and a death resigned, peaceful, and holy. I cannot forbear to mention, that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts: and that she may, in her present state, look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or ex-

* Translator of Martial, Bossuet, &c. and formerly master of an academy at Kensington.

ample have contributed. Whether this be more than a pleasing dream, or a just opinion of separate spirits, is indeed of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God: yet surely there is something pleasing in the belief, that our separation from those whom we love is merely corporeal; and it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship, if it can be made probable, that union, which has received the divine approbation, shall continue to eternity.

There is one expedient, by which you may, in some degree, continue her presence. If you write down minutely what you remember of her from your earliest years, you will read it with great pleasure, and receive from it many hints of soothing recollection, when time shall remove her yet farther from you, and your grief shall be matured to veneration. To this, however painful for the present, I cannot but advise you, as to a source of comfort and satisfaction in the time to come: for all comfort and all satisfaction is sincerely wished you by, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. Elphinston.

Dear sir,

I CANNOT but confess the failure of my correspondence; but hope the same regard, which you express for me on every other occasion, will incline you to forgive me. I am often, very often ill; and when I am well, am obliged to work; but, indeed, have never much used myself to punctuality. You are, however, not to make such kind of inferences, when I forbear to reply to your kindness; for be assured, I never receive a letter from you without great pleasure, and a very warm sense of your generosity and friendship, which I heartily blame myself for not cultivating with more care. In this, as in many other cases, I go wrong in opposition to conviction; for I think scarce any temporal good equally to be desired with the regard and familiarity of worthy men, and hope we shall be some time nearer to each other, and have a more ready way of pouring out our hearts.

I am glad that you still find encouragement to persevere in your publication,* and shall beg the favour of six more volumes to add to my former six, when you can with any convenience send them me. Please to present a set in my name to Mr. Ruddiman,† of whom I hear that his learning is not his highest excellence.

I have transcribed the mottos, and returned them, I hope not too late, of which I think many very happily performed. Mr. Cave has put the last in the Magazine,‡ in which I think he did well. I beg of you to write soon, and to write often, and to write long letters; which I hope in time to repay you, but you must be a patient creditor. I have, however, this of gratitude, that I think of you with regard, when I do not perhaps give the proofs which I ought of piety. Sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

Dr. Johnson to the Rev. Dr. Taylor.

March 18, 1752.

Dear sir,

LET me have your company and

* This was of the Rambler, at Edinburgh, to which Mr. Elphinston translated the mottos.

† A very learned writer, author of several historical and philological works. He died January 1757.

‡ See Gent. Mag. Oct. 1752.

your instruction. Do not live away from me; my distress is great.

Pray desire Mrs. Taylor to inform me what mourning I should buy for my mother and miss Porter, and bring a note in writing with you.

Remember me in your prayers; for vain is the help of man. I am, dear sir, &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Boothby.

January 1, 1755.

Dearest madam,

THOUGH I am afraid your illness leaves you little leisure for the reception of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the new year; and to declare my wishes, that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wish, indeed, I include myself, who have none but you on whom my heart reposes: yet surely I wish your good, even though your situation were such as should permit you to communicate no gratifications to, dearest, dearest madam, yours, &c.

LETTER XXXV.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Boothby.

Jan. 3, 1755.

Dearest madam,

NOBODY but you can recompense me for the distress which I suffered on Monday night. Having engaged Dr. Lawrence to let me know, at whatever hour, the state in which he left you, I concluded, when he staid so long, that he staid to see my dearest expire. I was composing myself as I could to hear what yet I hoped not to hear, when his servant brought me word that you were better. Do you continue to grow better? Let my dear little Miss inform me on a card. I would not have you write lest it should hurt you, and consequently hurt likewise, dearest madam, your, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

Dr. Johnson to the Right Honourable the Earl of Chesterfield.

February, 1755.

My lord,

I HAVE been lately informed, by the proprietor of the World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre;** —that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have

* The conqueror of the conqueror of the earth.

been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance,* one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it;† till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my lord, your lordship's most humble, most obedient servant.

* The following note is subjoined by Mr. Langton.—Dr. Johnson, when he gave me this copy of his letter, desired that I would annex to it his information to me, that whereas it is said in the letter that 'no assistance has been received,' he did once receive from lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds; but as that was so inconsiderable a sum, he thought the mention of it could not properly find place in a letter of the kind that this was.

† In this passage Dr. Johnson evidently alludes to the loss of his wife.

LETTER XXXVII.

*Dr. Johnson to Miss ******.*

July 19, 1755.

Madam,

I KNOW not how liberally your generosity would reward those who should do you any service, when you can so kindly acknowledge a favour which I intended only to myself. That accidentally hearing that you were in town, I made haste to enjoy an interval of pleasure, which I found would be short, was the natural consequence of that self-love which is always busy in quest of happiness; of that happiness which we often miss when we think it near, and sometimes find when we imagine it lost. When I had missed you, I went away disappointed; and did not know that my vexation would be so amply repaid by so kind a letter. A letter indeed can but imperfectly supply the place of its writer, at least of such a writer as you; and a letter which makes me still more desire your presence, is but a weak consolation under the necessity of living longer without you: with this however I must be for a time content, as much content at least as discontent will suffer me; for Mr. Baretti being a single being in this part of the world, and entirely clear from all engagements, takes the advantage of his independence, and will come before me; for which if I could blame him, I should punish him; but my own heart tells me that he only does to me, what, if I could, I should do to him.

I hope Mrs. ——, when she came to her favourite place, found her house dry, and her woods growing, and the breeze whistling, and the birds singing, and her own heart dancing. And for you, madam, whose heart cannot yet dance to such music, I know not what to hope; in-

deed I could hope every thing that would please you, except that perhaps the absence of higher pleasures is necessary to keep some little place vacant in your remembrance for, madam, your, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Boothby.

Dec. 30, 1755.

Dear madam,

IT is again midnight, and I am again alone. With what meditation shall I amuse this waste hour of darkness and vacuity? If I turn my thoughts upon myself, what do I perceive but a poor helpless being, reduced by a blast of wind to weakness and misery? How my present distemper was brought upon me I can give no account, but impute it to some sudden succession of cold to heat; such as in the common road of life cannot be avoided, and against which no precaution can be taken.

Of the fallaciousness of hope, and the uncertainty of schemes, every day gives some new proof; but it is seldom heeded, till something rather felt than seen awakens attention. This illness, in which I have suffered something and feared much more, has depressed my confidence and elation; and made me consider all that I have promised myself, as less certain to be attained or enjoyed. I have endeavoured to form resolutions of a better life; but I form them weakly, under the consciousness of an external motive. Not that I conceive a time of sickness a time improper for recollection and good purposes, which I believe diseases and calamities often sent to produce, but because no man can know how little his performance will answer to his promises; and designs are nothing in human eyes till they are realized by execution.

Continue, my dearest, your prayers for me, that no good resolution may be vain. You think, I believe, better of me than I deserve. I hope to be in time what I wish to be; and what I have hitherto satisfied myself too readily with only wishing.

Your billet brought me what I much wished to have, a proof that I am still remembered by you at the hour in which I most desire it.

The doctor is anxious about you. He thinks you too negligent of yourself; if you will promise to be cautious, I will exchange promises, as we have already exchanged injunctions. However, do not write to me more than you can easily bear; do not interrupt your ease to write at all.

Mr. Fitzherbert sent to-day to offer me some wine; the people about me say I ought to accept it; I shall therefore be obliged to him if he will send me a bottle.

There has gone about a report that I died to-day, which I mention, lest you should hear it and be alarmed. You see that I think my death may alarm you; which for me is to think very highly of earthly friendship. I believe it arose from the death of one of my neighbours. You know Des Cartes's argument. "I think, therefore I am." It is as good a consequence, "I write, therefore I am alive." I might give another, "I am alive, therefore I love miss Boothby;" but that I hope our friendship may be of far longer duration than life. I am, dearest madam, with sincere affection, your, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

From Dr. Johnson to Miss Boothby.

Dec. 30.

My sweet angel,

I HAVE read your book, I am afraid you will think without any great im-

provement; whether you can read my notes I know not. You ought not to be offended: I am, perhaps, as sincere as the writer. In all things that terminate here I shall be much guided by your influence, and I should take or leave by your direction; but I cannot receive my religion from any human hand. I desire, however, to be instructed, and am far from thinking myself perfect.

I beg you to return the book when you have looked into it. I should not have written what is in the margin, had I not had it from you, or had I not intended to show it you.

It affords me a new conviction, that in these books there is little new except new forms of expression; which may be sometimes taken, even by the writer, for new doctrines. I sincerely hope that God, whom you so much desire to serve aright, will bless you, and restore you to health, if he sees it best. Surely no human understanding can pray for any thing temporal, otherwise than conditionally. Dear angel, do not forget me. My heart is full of tenderness.

It has pleased God to permit me to be much better; which I believe will please you.

Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy, and I think a very probable remedy for indigestion and lubricity of the bowels. Dr. Lawrence has told me your case. Take an ounce of dried orange-peel, finely powdered, divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time in any manner; the best way is perhaps to drink it in a glass of hot red-port, or to eat it first, and drink the wine after it. If you mix cinnamon or nutmeg with the powder, it were not worse; but it will be more bulky, and so more troublesome. This is a medicine not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and, if not found useful, easily left off.

I would not have you offer it to the doctor as mine. Physicians do not love intruders: yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is, in my opinion, very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm; do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a-day, will be sufficient to begin, or less if you find any aversion. I think using sugar with it might be bad; if syrup, use old syrup of quinces: but even that I do not like. I should think better of conserve of sloes.—Has the doctor mentioned the bark? in powder you could hardly take it; perhaps you might take the infusion.

Do not think me troublesome. I am full of care. I love you and honour you; and am very unwilling to lose you. *A Dieu je vous recommende.* I am, madam, your, &c.

My compliments to my dear Miss.

LETTER XL.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

[Not dated, but written about the 15th of March.]

Dear Sir,

I AM ashamed to think that since I received your letter I have passed so many days without answering it.

I think there is no great difficulty in resolving your doubts. The reasons for which you are inclined to visit London, are, I think, not of sufficient strength to answer the objections. That you should delight to come once a year to the fountain of intelligence and pleasure is very natural; but both information and pleasure must be regulated by propriety. Pleasure, which cannot be obtained but by unreasonable or unsuitable expense, must always end in pain: and pleasure, which must be enjoyed at the expense of another's pain, can never be such as a worthy mind can fully delight in.

What improvement you might gain by coming to London, you may easily supply or easily compensate, by enjoining yourself some particular study at home, or opening some new avenue to information. Edinburgh is not yet exhausted; and I am sure you will find no pleasure here, which can deserve either that you should anticipate any part of your future fortune, or that you should condemn yourself and your lady to penurious frugality for the rest of the year.

I need not tell you what regard you owe to Mrs. Boswell's entreaties; or how much you ought to study the happiness of her, who studies yours with so much diligence, and of whose kindness you enjoy such good effects. Life cannot subsist in society but by reciprocal concessions. She permitted you to ramble last year; you must permit her now to keep you at home.

Your last reason is so serious, that I am unwilling to oppose it. Yet you must remember, that your image of worshipping once a year in a certain place, in imitation of the Jews, is but a comparison, and *simile non est idem*;* if the annual resort to Jerusalem was a duty to the Jews, it was a duty because it was commanded; and you have no such command, therefore no such duty. It may be dangerous to receive too readily, and indulge too fondly, opinions from which perhaps no pious mind is wholly disengaged, of local sanctity and local devotion. You know what strange effects they have produced over a great part of the Christian world. I am now writing, and you, when you read this, are reading, under the eye of Omnipresence.

To what degree fancy is to be admitted into religious offices, it would require much deliberation to determine. I am far from intending totally to exclude it. Fancy is a faculty bestowed by our Creator; and it is reasonable, that all his gifts should be used to his glory, that all our faculties should co-operate in his worship; but they are to co-operate according to the will of him that gave them, according to the order which his wisdom has established. As ceremonies prudential or convenient are less obligatory than positive ordinances, as bodily worship is only the token to others or ourselves of mental adoration, so Fancy is always to act in subordination to Reason. We may take Fancy for a companion, but must follow Reason as our guide.—We may allow Fancy to suggest certain ideas in certain places, but Reason must always be heard, when she tells us, that those ideas and those places have no natural or necessary relation. When we enter a church, we habitually recall to mind the duty of adoration, but we must not omit adoration for want of a temple; because we know, and ought to remember, that the Universal Lord is every where present; and that, therefore, to come to Iona, or to Jerusalem, though it may be useful, cannot be necessary.

Thus I have answered your letter, and have not answered it negligently. I love you too well to be careless when you are serious.

I think I shall be very diligent next week about our travels, which I have too long neglected. I am, dear sir, your most, &c.

Compliments to madam and miss.

* Like is not the same.

LETTER XLI.

From Dr. Johnson to Mr. James Macpherson.

Mr. James Macpherson,

I RECEIVED your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered

me I shall do my best to repel; and what I cannot do for myself, the law shall do for me. I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian.

What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think it an imposture still. For this opinion I have given my reason to the public, which I here dare you to refute. Your rage I defy. Your abilities, since your Homer, are not so formidable; and what I hear of your morals inclines me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but to what you shall prove. You may print this if you will.

LETTER XLII.

From Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Boswell.

July 22, 1777.

Madam,

THOUGH I am well enough pleased with the taste of sweetmeats, very little of the pleasure which I received at the arrival of your jar of marmalade arose from eating it. I received it as a token of friendship, as a proof of reconciliation, things much sweeter than sweetmeats, and upon this consideration I return you, dear madam, my sincerest thanks. By having your kindness I think I have a double security for the continuance of Mr. Boswell's, which it is not to be expected that any man can long keep, when the influence of a lady so highly and so justly valued operates against him. Mr. Boswell will tell you that I was always faithful to your interest, and always endeavoured to exalt you in his estimation.—You must now do the same for me. We must all help one another; and you must now consider me as, dear madam, your most obliged and most humble servant.

LETTER XLIII.

From Dr. Johnson to Mr. Elphinston.

July 27, 1778.

Sir,

HAVING myself suffered what you are now suffering, I well know the weight of your distress, how much need you have of comfort, and how little comfort can be given. A loss such as yours lacerates the mind, and breaks the whole system of purposes and hopes. It leaves a dismal vacuity in life, which affords nothing on which the affections can fix, or to which endeavour may be directed. All this I have known; and it is now, in the vicissitude of things, your turn to know it.

But in the condition of mortal beings, one must lose another. What would be the wretchedness of life, if there was not something always in view, some Being immutable and unfailing, to whose mercy man may have recourse! Τον πρωτον κινουντα ακινητον.*

Here we must rest. The greatest Being is the most benevolent. We must not grieve for the dead as men without hope, because we know they are in his hands. We have, indeed, not leisure to grieve long, because we are hastening to follow them.—Your race and mine have been interrupted by many obstacles, but we must humbly hope for an happy end. I am, sir, your most humble servant.

LETTER XLIV.

From Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, on the Death of Mr. Thrale.

London, April 5, 1781.

Dearest madam,

OF your injunctions to pray for you and write to you, I hope to leave neither unobserved; and I hope to find

* The first immoveable mover.

you willing in a short time to alleviate your trouble by some other exercise of the mind. I am not without my part of the calamity. No death since that of my wife has ever oppressed me like this. But let us remember, that we are in the hands of him, who knows when to give and when to take away; who will look upon us with mercy through all our variations of existence, and who invites us to call on him in the day of trouble. Call upon him in this great revolution of life, and call with confidence. You will then find comfort for the past, and support for the future. He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give you another mode of happiness as a mother; and, at last, the happiness of losing all temporal cares in the thoughts of an eternity in heaven.

I do not exhort you to reason yourself into tranquillity. We must first pray, and then labour; first implore the blessing of God, and then use those means which he puts into our hands. Cultivated ground has few weeds; a mind occupied by lawful business has little room for useless regret.

We read the will to-day; but I will not fill my first letter with any other account than that, with all my zeal for your advantage, I am satisfied; and that the other executors, more used to consider property than I, commend it for wisdom and equity. Yet why should I not tell you, that you have five hundred pounds for your immediate expenses, and two thousand pounds a year, with both the houses and all the goods?

Let us pray for one another, that the time, whether long or short, that shall yet be granted us, may be well spent; and that when this life, which at the longest is very short, shall come to an end, a better may begin, which shall never end. I am, dearest madam, your, &c.

LETTER XLV.

From Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London, April 9, 1781.

Dearest madam,

THAT you are gradually recovering your tranquillity is the effect to be humbly expected from trust in God. Do not represent life as darker than it is. Your loss has been very great, but you retain more than almost any other can hope to possess. You are high in the opinion of mankind; you have children from whom much pleasure may be expected; and that you will find many friends you have no reason to doubt. Of my friendship, be it worth more or less, I hope you think yourself certain, without much art or care. It will not be easy for me to repay the benefits that I have received; but I hope to be always ready at your call. Our sorrow has different effects; you are withdrawn into solitude, and I am driven into company. I am afraid of thinking what I have lost. I never had such a friend before. Let me have your prayers and those of my dear Queeney.

The prudence and resolution of your design to return so soon to your business and your duty, deserves great praise; I shall communicate it on Wednesday to the other executors. Be pleased to let me know whether you would have me come to Streatham to receive you, or stay here till the next day. I am, &c.

LETTER XLVI.

From Dr. Johnson to Mr. Hector in Birmingham.

[Without a date, but supposed to be about this time.]

Dear sir,

THAT you and dear Mrs. Careless

Sir Joshua Reynolds Pinxt. Engraved by T. Kelly.

Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

Published by Samuel Walker, Harlem Place, Washington Street, Boston.

should have care or curiosity about my health, gives me that pleasure which every man feels from finding himself not forgotten. In age we feel again that love of our native place and our early friends, which, in the bustle or amusements of middle life, were overborne and suspended. You and I should now naturally cling to one another: we have outlived most of those who could pretend to rival us in each other's kindness. In our walk through life we have dropped our companions, and are now to pick up such as chance may offer us, or to travel on alone. You, indeed, have a sister, with whom you can divide the day: I have no natural friend left; but Providence has been pleased to preserve me from neglect; I have not wanted such alleviations of life as friendship could supply. My health has been, from my twentieth year, such as has seldom afforded me a single day of ease; but it is at least not worse; and I sometimes make myself believe that it is better. My disorders are, however, still sufficiently oppressive.

I think of seeing Staffordshire again this autumn, and intend to find my way through Birmingham, where I hope to see you and dear Mrs. Careless well. I am, sir, your affectionate friend.

LETTER XLVII.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

London, March 28, 1782.

Dear sir,

THE pleasure which we used to receive from each other on Good-Friday and Easter-day, we must this year be content to miss. Let us, however, pray for each other, and hope to see one another yet from time to time with mutual delight. My disorder has been a cold, which impeded the organs of respiration, and kept me many weeks in a state of great uneasiness, but by repeated phlebotomy is now relieved; and, next to the recovery of Mrs. Boswell, I flatter myself that you will rejoice at mine.

What we shall do in the summer it is yet too early to consider. You want to know what you shall do now; I do not think this time of bustle and confusion likely to produce any advantage to you. Every man has those to reward and gratify who have contributed to his advancement. To come hither with such expectations at the expense of borrowed money, which, I find, you know not where to borrow, can hardly be considered as prudent. I am sorry to find, what your solicitations seem to imply, that you have already gone the whole length of your credit. This is to set the quiet of your life at hazard. If you anticipate your inheritance, you can at last inherit nothing; all that you receive must pay for the past. You must get a place, or pine in penury, with the empty name of a great estate. Poverty, my dear friend, is so great an evil, and pregnant with so much temptation, and so much misery, that I cannot but earnestly enjoin you to avoid it. Live on what you have, live if you can on less; do not borrow either for vanity or pleasure; the vanity will end in shame, and the pleasure in regret; stay therefore at home till you have saved money for your journey hither.

'The Beauties of Johnson' are said to have got money to the collector; if the 'Deformities' have the same success I shall be still a more extensive benefactor.

Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, who is, I hope, reconciled to me: and to the young people, whom I never have offended.

You never told me the success of your plea against the solicitors. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER XLVIII.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

London, Dec. 7, 1782.

Dear sir,

HAVING passed almost this whole year in a succession of disorders, I went in October to Brighthelmston, whither I came in a state of so much weakness that I rested four times in walking between the inn and the lodging. By physic and abstinence I grew bettter, and am now reasonably easy, though at a great distance from health. I am afraid, however, that health begins, after seventy, and often long before, to have a meaning different from that which it had at thirty. But it is culpable to murmur at the established order of the creation, as it is vain to oppose it. He that lives must grow old; and he that would rather grow old than die, has God to thank for the infirmities of old age.

At your long silence I am rather angry. You do not, since now you are the head of your house, think it worth your while to try whether you or your friend can live longer without writing, nor suspect, after so many years of friendship, that when I do not write to you I forget you? Put all such useless jealousies out of your head, and disdain to regulate your own practice by the practice of another, or by any other principle than the desire of doing right.

Your economy, I suppose, begins now to be settled: your expenses are adjusted to your revenue, and all your people in their proper places. Resolve not to be poor: whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness, it certainly destroys liberty, and it makes some virtues impracticable, and others extremely difficult.

Let me know the history of your life since your accession to your estate. How many houses, how many cows, how much land in your own hand, and what bargains you make with your tenants.

* * * * * *

Of my 'Lives of the Poets,' they have printed a new edition in octavo, I hear, of three thousand. Did I give a set to lord Hailes? If I did not, I will do it out of these. What did you make of all your copy?

Mrs. Thrale and the three misses are now, for the winter, in Argyll-street. Sir Joshua Reynolds has been out of order, but is well again; and I am, dear sir, your affectionate, humble servant.

LETTER XLIX.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Susannah Thrale.

Dearest miss Susy,

WHEN you favoured me with your letter, you seemed to be in want of materials to fill it, having met with no great adventures, either of peril or delight, nor done nor suffered any thing out of the common course of life.

When you have lived longer, and considered more, you will find the common course of life very fertile of observation and reflection. Upon the common course of life must our thoughts and our conversation be generally employed. Our general course of life must denominate us wise or foolish; happy or miserable: if it is well regulated, we pass on prosperously and smoothly; as it is neglected, we live in embarrassment, perplexity, and uneasiness.

Your time, my love, passes, I suppose, in devotion, reading, work, and company. Of your devotions, in which I earnestly advise you to be very punctual, you may not perhaps think it proper to give me an account; and of work, unless I understood it better, it will be of no

great use to say much; but books and company will always supply you with materials for your letters to me, as I shall always be pleased to know what you are reading, and with what you are pleased; and shall take great delight in knowing what impression new modes or new characters make upon you, and to observe with what attention you distinguish the tempers, dispositions, and abilities of your companions.

A letter may be always made out of the books of the morning or talk of the evening; and any letters from you, my dearest, will be welcome to your, &c.

LETTER L.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London, Aug. 20, 1783.

Madam,

This has been a day of great emotion; the office of the Communion of the Sick has been performed in poor Mrs. Williams's chamber. She was too weak to rise from her bed, and is therefore to be supposed unlikely to live much longer. She has, I hope, little violent pain, but is wearing out by torpid inappetence and wearisome decay: but all the powers of her mind are in their full vigour; and, when she has spirits enough for conversation, she possesses all the intellectual excellence that she ever had. Surely this is an instance of mercy much to be desired by a parting soul.

At home I see almost all my companions dead or dying. At Oxford I have just left Wheeler, the man with whom I most delighted to converse. The sense of my own diseases, and the sight of the world sinking round me, oppress me perhaps too much. I hope that all these admonitions will not be in vain, and that I shall learn to die as dear Williams is dying, who was very cheerful before and after this awful solemnity, and seems to resign herself with calmness and hope upon Eternal Mercy.

I read your last kind letter with great delight; but when I came to *love* and *honour*, what sprung in my mind?—How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not.

I sat to Mrs. Reynolds yesterday for my picture, perhaps the tenth time, and I sat near three hours with the patience of *mortal born to bear*; at last she declared it quite finished, and seems to think it fine. I told her it was *Johnson's grimly Ghost*. It is to be engraved, and I think *in glided*, &c. will be a good inscription. I am, madam, your, &c.

LETTER LI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London, Sept. 22, 1783.

Dear madam,

Happy are you that have ease and leisure to want intelligence of air-balloons. Their existence is, I believe, indubitable; but I know not that they can possibly be of any use. The construction is this:—The chymical philosophers have discovered a body (which I have forgotten, but will inquire) which, dissolved by an acid, emits a vapour lighter than the atmospherical air. This vapour is caught, among other means, by tying a bladder, compressed upon the bottle in which the dissolution is performed; the vapour rising swells the bladder, and fills it. The bladder is then tied and removed, and another applied, till as much of this light air is collected as is wanted. Then a large spherical case is made, and very large it must be, of the lightest matter that can be found, secured by some method, like that of oiling silk, against all passage of

air. Into this are emptied all the bladders of light air, and if there is light air enough it mounts into the clouds; upon the same principle as a bottle, filled with water, will sink in water, but a bottle filled with ether would float. It rises till it comes to air of equal tenuity with its own, if wind or water does not spoil it on the way. Such, madam, is an air-balloon.

Meteors have been this autumn very often seen, but I have never been in their way.

Poor Williams has, I hope, seen the end of her afflictions. She acted with prudence, and she bore with fortitude. She has left me.

"Thou thy weary task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages."

Had she had good humour and prompt elocution, her universal curiosity and comprehensive knowledge would have made her the delight of all that knew her. She left her little to your charity-school.

The complaint about which you inquire is a sarcocele; I thought it a hydrocele, and heeded it but little. Puncture has detected the mistake; it can be safely suffered no longer. Upon inspection, three days ago, it was determined *extrema ventura.** If excision should be delayed, there is danger of a gangrene. You would not have me, for fear of pain, perish in putrefaction. I shall, I hope, with trust in Eternal Mercy, lay hold of the possibility of life which yet remains. My health is not bad; the gout is now trying at my feet. My appetite and digestion are good, and my sleep better than formerly: I am not dejected, and I am not feeble. There is, however, danger enough in such operations at seventy-four.

Let me have your prayers and those of the young dear people. I am, dear madam, your, &c.

Write soon and often.

* To try the last.

LETTER LII.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Chapone.

Nov. 28, 1783.

Madam,

By sending the tragedy to me a second time* I think that a very honourable distinction has been shown me; and I did not delay the perusal, of which I am now to tell the effect.

The construction of the play is not completely regular; the stage is too often vacant, and the scenes are not sufficiently connected. This, however, would be called, by Dryden, only a mechanical defect; which takes away little from the power of the poem, and which is seen rather than felt.

A rigid examiner of the diction might, perhaps, wish some words changed, and some lines more vigorously terminated. But from such petty imperfections what writer was ever free?

The general form and force of the dialogue is of more importance. It seems to want that quickness of reciprocation which characterizes the English drama, and is not always sufficiently fervid or animated.

Of the sentiments, I remember not one that I wished omitted. In the imagery I cannot forbear to distinguish the comparison of joy succeeding grief, to light rushing on the eye accustomed to darkness. It seems to have all that can be desired to make it please. It is new, just, and delightful.†

With the characters, either as con-

* Dr. Johnson, having been very ill when the tragedy was first sent to him, had declined the consideration of it.

† "I could have borne my woes; that stranger Joy
Wounds while it smiles:—The long imprison'd wretch,
Emerging from the night of his damp cell,
Shrinks from the sun's bright beams; and that which flings
Gladness o'er all, to him is agony."

ceived or preserved, I have no fault to find; but was much inclined to congratulute a writer, who, in defiance of prejudice and fashion, made the archbishop a good man, and scorned all thoughtless applause, which a vicious churchman would have brought him.

The catastrophe is affecting. The father and daughter both culpable, both wretched, and both penitent, divide between them our pity and our sorrow.

Thus, madam, I have performed what I did not willingly undertake, and could not decently refuse. The noble writer will be pleased to remember, that sincere criticism ought to raise no resentment, because judgment is not under the control of will; but involuntary criticism, as it has still less of choice, ought to be more remote from possibility of offence. I am, &c.

LETTER LIII.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London, Dec. 27, 1783.

Dear madam,

THE wearisome solitude of the long evenings did indeed suggest to me the convenience of a club in my neighbourhood, but I have been hindered from attending it by want of breath. If I can complete the scheme, you shall have the names and the regulations.

The time of the year, for I hope the fault is rather in the weather than in me, has been very hard upon me. The muscles of my breast are much convulsed. Dr. Heberden recommends opiates, of which I have such horror, that I do not think of them but *in extremes*. I was however, driven to them last night for refuge, and, having taken the usual quantity, durst not go to bed, for fear of that uneasiness to which a supine posture exposes me, but rested all night in a chair with much relief, and have been to-day more warm, active, and cheerful.

You have more than once wondered at my complaint of solitude, when you hear that I am crowded with visits. *Inopem me copia fecit.** Visitors are no proper companions in the chamber of sickness. They come when I could sleep or read, they stay till I am weary, they force me to attend when my mind calls for relaxation, and to speak when my powers will hardly actuate my tongue. The amusements and consolations of languor and depression are conferred by familiar and domestic companions, which can be visited or called at will, and can occasionally be quitted or dismissed, who do not obstruct accommodation by ceremony, or destroy indolence by awakening effort.

Such society I had with Levet and Williams; such I had where—I am never likely to have it more.

I wish, dear lady, to you and my dear girls many a cheerful and pious Christmas. I am, your, &c.

LETTER LIV.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London, Jan. 12, 1784.

Dear madam,

IF, as you observe, my former letter was written with trepidation, there is little reason except the habit of enduring, why this should show more steadiness. I am confined to the house; I do not know that any thing grows better; my physicians direct me to combat the hard weather with opium; I cannot well support its turbulence, and yet cannot forbear it, for its immediate effect is ease; having kept me waking all the night, it forces sleep upon me

* Plenty made me poor.

in the day, and recompenses a night of tediousness with a day of uselessness. My legs and my thighs grow very tumid: in the mean time my appetite is good, and if my physicians do not flatter me death is rushing upon me. But this is the hand of God.

The first talk of the sick is commonly of themselves; but if they talk of nothing else, they cannot complain if they are soon left without an audience.

You observe, madam, that the balloon engages all mankind, and it is indeed a wonderful and unexpected addition to human knowledge; but we have a daring projector, who, disdaining the help of fumes and vapours, is making better than Dædalean wings, with which he will master the balloon and its companions as an eagle masters a goose. It is very seriously true, that a subscription of eight hundred pounds has been raised for the wire and workmanship of iron wings; one pair of which, and I think a tail, are now shown in the Hay-market, and they are making another pair at Birmingham. The whole is said to weigh two hundred pounds—no specious preparation for flying; but there are those who expect to see him in the sky. When I can leave the house I will tell you more.

I had the same old friends to dine with me on Wednesday, and may say, that since I lost sight of you I have had one pleasant day. I am, madam, your, &c.

Pray send me a direction to sir —— Musgrave in Ireland.

LETTER LV.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London. Jan. 21, 1784.

Dear madam,

Dr. Heberden this day favoured me with a visit; and after hearing what I had to tell him of miseries and pains, and comparing my present with my past state, declared me well. That his opinion is erroneous, I know with too much certainty; and yet was glad to hear it, as it sets extremities at a greater distance: he, who is by his physician thought well, is at least not thought in immediate danger. They, therefore, whose attention to me makes them talk of my health, will, I hope, soon not drop, but lose their subject. But, alas! I had no sleep last night, and sit now panting over my paper. *Dabit Deus his quoque finem.** I have really hope from spring; and am ready, like Almanzor, to bid the sun fly swiftly, and leave weeks and months behind him. The sun has looked for six thousand years upon the world to little purpose, if he does not know that a sick man is almost as impatient as a lover.

Mr. Cator gives such an account of miss Cecy, as you and all of us must delight to hear. Cator has a rough, manly, independent understanding, and does not spoil it by complaisance; he never speaks merely to please, and seldom is mistaken in things which he has any right to know. I think well of her for pleasing him, and of him for being pleased; and, at the close, am delighted to find him delighted with her excellence. Let your children, dear madam, be his care, and your pleasure; close your thoughts upon them; and, when sad fancies are excluded, health and peace will return together. I am, dear madam, your old friend.

LETTER LVI.

Dr. Johnson to Lord Chancellor Thurlow.

Sept. 1784.

My lord,

After a long and not inattentive observation of mankind, the genero-

* God shall put an end to these things.

sity of your lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty so liberally bestowed I should gladly receive if my condition made it necessary; for to such a mind who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim. My journey to the continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians, and I was very desirous that your lordship should be told of it by sir Joshua Reynolds as an event very uncertain; for if I grew much better I should not be willing, if much worse, not able to migrate.

Your lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal; yet as I have had no long time to brood hope, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment; and from your lordship's kindness I have received a benefit which only men like you are able to bestow. I shall now live *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit. I am, my lord, your lordships most obliged, most grateful, and most humble servant.

SECTION II.

FROM THE LETTERS OF WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ.

LETTER I.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

Huntingdon, June 24, 1765.

Dear Joe,

THE only recompense I can make you for your kind attention to my affairs, during my illness, is to tell you, that by the mercy of God I am restored to perfect health, both of mind and body. This, I believe, will give you pleasure, and I would gladly do any thing from which you could receive it.

I left St. Alban's on the seventeenth, and arrived that day at Cambridge, spent some time there with my brother, and came hither on the twenty-second. I have a lodging that puts me continually in mind of our summer excursions; we have had many worse, and except the size of it (which however is sufficient for a single man) but few better. I am not quite alone, having brought a servant with me from St. Alban's, who is the very mirror of fidelity and affection for his master. And whereas the Turkish Spy says, he kept no servant because he would not have an enemy in his house, I hired mine because I would have a friend. Men do not usually bestow these encomiums on their lackeys, nor do they usually deserve them; but I have

had experience of mine, both in sickness and in health, and never saw his fellow.

The river Ouse (I forget how they spell it) is the most agreeable circumstance in this part of the world; at this town it is I believe as wide as the Thames at Windsor: nor does the silver Thames better deserve that epithet, nor has it more flowers upon its banks, these being attributes, which, in strict truth, belong to neither. Fluellen would say, they are as like as my fingers to my fingers, and there is salmon in both. It is a noble stream to bathe in, and I shall make that use of it three times a week, having introduced myself to it for the first time this morning.

I beg you will remember me to all my friends, which is a task will cost you no great pains to execute—particularly remember me to those of your own house, and believe me your very affectionate.

LETTER II.

To Lady Hesketh.

July 12, 1765.

My dear cousin,

You are very good to me, and if you will only continue to write at such intervals as you find convenient, I shall receive all that pleasure, which I proposed to myself from our correspondence. I desire no more than that you would never drop me for any length of time together, for I shall then think you only write because something happened to put you in mind of me, or for some other reason equally mortifying. I am not however so unreasonable as to expect you should perform this act of friendship so frequently as myself; for you live in a world swarming with engagements, and my hours are almost all my own. You must every day be employed in doing what is expected from you by a thousand others, and I have nothing to do but what is most agreeable to myself.

Our mentioning Newton's Treatise on the Prophecies, brings to my mind an anecdote of Dr. Young, who you know died lately at Welwyn. Dr. Cotton, who was intimate with him, paid him a visit about a fortnight before he was seized with his last illness. The old man was then in perfect health; the antiquity of his person, the gravity of his utterance, and the earnestness with which he discoursed about religion, gave him, in the Doctor's eye, the appearance of a prophet. They had been delivering their sentiments upon this book of Newton, when Young closed the conference thus:—"My friend, there are two considerations upon which my faith in Christ is built as upon a rock: the fall of man, the redemption of man, and the resurrection of man, the three cardinal articles of our religion, are such as human ingenuity could never have invented, therefore they must be divine. The other argument is this—If the prophecies have been fulfilled (of which there is abundant demonstration), the Scripture must be the word of God; and if the Scripture is the word of God, Christianity must be true."

This treatise on the Prophecies serves a double purpose: it not only proves the truth of religion, in a manner that never has been, nor ever can be controverted; but it proves likewise, that the Roman Catholic is the apostate and anti-christian church, so frequently foretold both in the Old and New Testaments. Indeed so fatally connected is the refutation of Popery with the truth of Christianity, when the latter is evinced by the completion of the prophecies, that in proportion as light is thrown upon the one, the deformities and errors of the other are more plainly exhibited. But I leave

you to the book itself: there are parts of it which may possibly afford you less entertainment than the rest, because you have never been a schoolboy; but in the main it is so interesting, and you are so fond of that which is so, that I am sure you will like it.

My dear cousin,—how happy am I in having a friend, to whom I can open my heart upon these subjects! I have many intimates in the world, and have had many more than I shall have hereafter, to whom a long letter, upon these most important articles, would appear tiresome at least, if not impertinent. But I am not afraid of meeting with that reception from you, who have never yet made it your interest, that there should be no truth in the word of God. May this everlasting truth be your comfort while you live, and attend you with peace and joy in your last moments! I love you too well not to make this a part of my prayers; and when I remember my friends on these occasions, there is no likelihood that you can be forgotten. Yours, ever.

P. S.—*Cambridge.*—I add this postscript at my brother's rooms. He desires to be affectionately remembered to you, and if you are in town about a fortnight hence, when he proposes to be there himself, will take a breakfast with you.

LETTER III.

To Lady Hesketh.

Huntingdon, Sept. 14, 1765.

My dear cousin,

THE longer I live here, the better I like the place, and the people who belong to it. I am upon very good terms with no less than five families, besides two or three odd scrambling fellows like myself. The last acquaintance I made here is with the race of the Unwins, consisting of father and mother, son and daughter, the most comfortable, social folks you ever knew. The son is about twenty-one years of age, one of the most unreserved and amiable young men I ever conversed with. He is not yet arrived at that time of life, when suspicion recommends itself to us in the form of wisdom, and sets every thing, but our own dear selves, at an immeasurable distance from our esteem and confidence. Consequently he is known almost as soon as seen; and having nothing in his heart that makes it necessary for him to keep it barred and bolted, opens it to the perusal even of a stranger.—The father is a clergyman, and the son is designed for orders. The design however is quite his own, proceeding merely from his being, and having always been, sincere in his belief and love of the Gospel. Another acquaintance I have lately made, is with a Mr. Nicholson, a North-country divine, very poor, but very good, and very happy. He reads prayers here twice a-day, all the year round, and travels on foot to serve two churches every Sunday through the year, his journey out and home again being sixteen miles. I supped with him last night. He gave me bread and cheese, and a black jug of ale of his own brewing, and doubtless brewed by his own hands. Another of my acquaintance is Mr. ——, a thin, tall, old man, and as good as he is thin. He drinks nothing but water, and eats no flesh, partly (I believe) from a religious scruple (for he is very religious), and partly in the spirit of a valetudinarian. He is to be met with every morning of his life, at about six o'clock, at a fountain of very fine water, about a mile from the town, which is reckoned extremely like the Bristol spring. Being both early risers, and the only early walkers in the place, we soon became acquainted. His great piety can be equalled by nothing, but his

great regularity; for he is the most perfect time-piece in the world. I have received a visit likewise from Mr. ——. He is very much a gentleman, well-read, and sensible. I am persuaded, in short, that if I had had the choice of all England where to fix my abode, I could not have chosen better for myself, and most likely I should not have chosen so well.

You say, you hope it is not necessary for salvation to undergo the same afflictions that I have undergone.—No! my dear cousin, God deals with his children as a merciful father; he does not, as he himself tells us, afflict willingly the sons of men. Doubtless there are many who, having been placed, by his good providence, out of the reach of any great evil, and the influence of bad example, have, from their very infancy, been partakers of the grace of his holy Spirit, in such a manner as never to have allowed themselves in any grievous offence against him. May you love him more and more, day by day; as every day, while you think upon him, you will find him more worthy of your love: and may you be finally accepted by him for his sake, whose intercession for all his faithful servants cannot but prevail! Yours ever.

LETTER IV.

To Lady Hesketh.

Huntingdon, Oct. 10, 1765.

My dear cousin,

I SHOULD grumble at your long silence, if I did not know, that one may love one's friends very well, though one is not always in a humour to write to them. Besides, I have the satisfaction of being perfectly sure, that you have at least twenty times recollected the debt you owe me, and as often resolved to pay it: and perhaps, while you remain indebted to me, you think of me twice as often as you would do if the account was clear. These are the reflections with which I comfort myself under the affliction of not hearing from you: my temper does not incline me to jealousy, and if it did, I should set all right by having recourse to what I have already received from you.

I thank God for your friendship, and for every friend I have: for all the pleasing circumstances here, for my health of body, and perfect serenity of mind. To recollect the past, and compare it with the present, is all I have need of to fill me with gratitude; and to be grateful is to be happy. Not that I think myself sufficiently thankful, or that I ever shall be so in this life. The warmest heart perhaps only feels by fits, and is often as insensible as the coldest. This at least is frequently the case with mine, and oftener than it should be. But the mercy that can forgive iniquity, will never be severe to mark our frailties. To that mercy, my dear cousin, I commend you, with earnest wishes for your welfare, and remain your ever affectionate.

LETTER V.

To Major Cowper.

Huntingdon, Oct. 18, 1765.

My dear major,

I HAVE neither lost the use of my fingers nor my memory, though my unaccountable silence might incline you to suspect that I had lost both. The history of those things which have, from time to time, prevented my scribbling, would not only be insipid, but extremely voluminous, for which reasons they will not make their appearance at present, nor probably at any time hereafter. If my neglecting to write to you were a proof that I had never thought of you, and that had been really the case,

five shillings a piece would have been much too little to give for the sight of such a monster! but I am no such monster, nor do I perceive in myself the least tendency to such a transformation. You may recollect that I had but very uncomfortable expectations of the accommodations that I should meet with at Huntingdon. How much better is it to take our lot, where it shall please Providence to cast it, without anxiety! Had I chosen for myself, it is impossible I could have fixed upon a place so agreeable to me in all respects. I so much dreaded the thought of having a new acquaintance to make, with no other recommendation than that of being a perfect stranger, that I heartily wished no creature here might take the least notice of me. Instead of which, in about two months after my arrival, I became known to all the visitable people here, and do verily think it the most agreeable neighbourhood I ever saw.

Here are three families who have received me with the utmost civility, and two in particular have treated me with as much cordiality as if their pedigree and mine had grown upon the same sheep-skin. Besides these, there are three or four single men, who suit my temper to a hair. The town is one of the neatest in England; the country is fine for several miles about it, and the roads, which are all turnpike, and strike out four or five different ways, are perfectly good all the year round. I mention this latter circumstance chiefly because my distance from Cambridge has made a horseman of me at last, or at least is likely to do so. My brother and I meet every week, by an alternate reciprocation of intercourse, as Sam Johnson would express it: sometimes I get a lift in a neighbour's chaise, but generally ride. As to my own personal condition, I am much happier than the day is long, and sun-shine and candle-light alike see me perfectly contented. I get books in abundance, as much company as I choose, a deal of *comfortable leisure*, and enjoy better health, I think, than for many years past. What is there wanting to make me happy? Nothing, if I can but be as thankful as I ought: and I trust that He, who has bestowed so many blessings upon me, will give me gratitude to crown them all. I beg you will give my love to my dear cousin Maria, and to every body at the Park. If Mrs. Maitland is with you, as I suspect by a passage in lady Hesketh's letter to me, pray remember me to her very affectionately. And believe me, my dear friend, ever yours.

LETTER VI.

To Mrs. Cowper.

My dear cousin,

I HAVE not been behind-hand in reproaching myself with neglect, but desire to take shame to myself for my unprofitableness in this, as well as in all other respects. I take the next immediate opportunity however of thanking you for yours, and of assuring you, that instead of being surprised at your silence, I rather wonder that you, or any of my friends, have any room left for so careless and negligent a correspondent in your memories. I am obliged to you for the intelligence you send me of my kindred, and rejoice to hear of their welfare. He, who settles the bounds of our habitations, has at length cast our lot at a great distance from each other; but I do not therefore forget their former kindness to me, or cease to be interested in their well-being. You live in the centre of a world I know you do not delight in. Happy are you, my dear friend, in being able to discern the insufficiency of all it can afford, to fill and satisfy the desires of an immortal soul.

That God, who created us for the enjoyment of himself, has determined in mercy that it shall fail us here, in order that the blessed result of all our inquiries after happiness in the creature, may be a warm pursuit, and a close attachment to our true interests, in fellowship and communion with Him, through the name and mediation of a dear Redeemer. I bless his goodness and grace, that I have any reason to hope I am partaker with you in the desire after better things than are to be found in a world polluted with sin, and therefore devoted to destruction. May He enable us both to consider our present life in its only true light, as an opportunity put into our hands to glorify him amongst men, by a conduct suited to his word and will. I am miserably defective in this holy and blessed art; but I hope there is at the bottom of all my sinful infirmities, a sincere desire to live just so long as I may be enabled, in some poor measure, to answer the end of my existence in this respect, and then to obey the summons, and attend him in a world, where they, who are his servants here, shall pay him an unsinful obedience for ever.—Your dear mother is too good to me, and puts a more charitable construction upon my silence than the fact will warrant. I am not better employed than I should be in corresponding with her. I have that within, which hinders me wretchedly, in every thing that I ought to do, but is prone to trifle, and let time and every good thing run to waste. I hope however to write to her soon.

My love and best wishes attend Mr. Cowper, and all that inquire after me. May God be with you, to bless you, and do you good, by all his dispensations! Don't forget me when you are speaking to our best friend before his mercy-seat. Yours ever.

N. B. I am not married.

LETTER VII.

To Mrs. Cowper.

Olney, Aug. 31, 1769.

My dear cousin,

A LETTER from your brother Frederic brought me yesterday the most afflicting intelligence that has reached me these many years. I pray to God to comfort you, and to enable you to sustain this heavy stroke, with that resignation to his will which none but Himself can give, and which he gives to none but his own children. How blessed and happy is your lot, my dear friend, beyond the common lot of the greater part of mankind; that you know what it is to draw near to God in prayer, and are acquainted with a throne of grace! You have resources in the infinite love of a dear Redeemer, which are withheld from millions; and the promises of God, which are Yea and Amen in Jesus, are sufficient to answer all your necessities, and to sweeten the bitterest cup which your heavenly Father will ever put into your hand.—May he now give you liberty to drink at these wells of salvation, till you are filled with consolation and peace, in the midst of trouble. He has said, When thou passest through the fire, I will be with thee; and when through the floods, they shall not overflow thee. You have need of such a word as this, and he knows your need of it, and the time of necessity is the time, when he will be sure to appear in behalf of those who trust in him. I bear you and yours upon my heart before him, night and day; for I never expect to hear of distress, which shall call upon me with a louder voice to pray for the sufferer. I know the Lord hears me for myself, vile and sinful as I am, and believe, and am sure, that he will hear me for you also. He is the friend of the widow, and the father of the fatherless, even God in his holy

habitation; in all our afflictions he is afflicted, and chastens us in mercy. Surely he will sanctify this dispensation to you, do you great and everlasting good by it, make the world appear like dust and vanity in your sight, as it truly is: and open to your view the glories of a better country, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor pain; but God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes for ever. Oh that comfortable word! "I have chosen thee in the furnaces of affliction;" so that our very sorrows are evidences of our calling, and he chastens us because we are his children.

My dear cousin,—I commit you to the word of his grace, and to the comforts of his holy Spirit. Your life is needful for your family; may God, in mercy to them, prolong it; and may he preserve you from the dangerous effects which a stroke like this might have upon a frame so tender as yours. I grieve with you, I pray for you: could I do more, I would; but God must comfort you. Yours, in our dear Lord Jesus.

LETTER VIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Sept. 21, 1779.

AMICO mio,* be pleased to buy me a glazier's diamond pencil. I have glazed the two frames designed to receive my pine-plants. But I cannot mend the kitchen windows, till by the help of that implement I can reduce the glass to its proper dimensions. If I were a plumber, I should be a complete glazier; and possibly the happy time may come, when I shall be seen trudging away to the neighbouring towns with a shelf of glass hanging at my back. If government should impose another tax upon that commodity, I hardly know a business in which a gentleman might more successfully employ himself. A Chinese, of ten times my fortune, would avail himself of such an opportunity without scruple; and why should not I, who want money as much as any mandarin in China! Rousseau would have been charmed to have seen me so occupied, and would have exclaimed, with rapture, "that he had found the Emilius, who (he supposed) had subsisted only in his own idea." I would recommend it to you to follow my example. You will presently qualify yourself for the task; and may not only amuse yourself at home, but may even exercise your skill in mending the church windows; which, as it would save money to the parish, would conduce, together with your other ministerial accomplishments, to make you extremely popular in the place.

I have eight pair of tame pigeons. When I first enter the garden in the morning, I find them perched upon the wall, waiting for their breakfast, for I feed them always upon the gravel walk. If your wish should be accomplished, and you should find yourself furnished with the wings of a dove, I shall undoubtedly find you amongst them; only be so good, if that should be the case, to announce yourself by some means or other, for I imagine your crop will require something better than tares to fill it.

Your mother and I, last week, made a trip in a post-chaise to Gayhurst, the seat of Mr. Wright, about four miles off. He understood that I did not much affect strange faces, and sent over his servant on purpose to inform me, that he was going into Leicestershire, and that if I chose to see the gardens, I might gratify myself, without danger of seeing the proprietor. I accepted the invitation, and was delighted with all I found there. The situation is happy, the gardens elegantly disposed, the hot-

* My friend.

house in the most flourishing state, and the orange trees the most captivating creatures of the kind I ever saw. A man, in short, had need have the talents of Cox or Langford, the auctioneers, to do the whole scene justice. Our love attends you all. Yours.

LETTER IX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Oct. 31, 1779.

My dear friend,

I WROTE my last letter merely to inform you, that I had nothing to say, in answer to which you have said nothing. I admire the propriety of your conduct, though I am a loser by it. I will endeavour to say something now, and shall hope for something in return.

I have been well entertained with Johnson's biography, for which I thank you; with one exception, and that a swinging one, I think he has acquitted himself with his usual good sense and sufficiency. His treatment of Milton is unmerciful to the last degree. He has belaboured that great poet's character with the most industrious cruelty. As a man he has hardly left him the shadow of one good quality. Churlishness in his private life, and a rancorous hatred of every thing royal in his public, are the two colours with which he has smeared all the canvass. If he had any virtues, they are not to be found in the Doctor's picture of him: and it is well for Milton, that some sourness in his temper is the only vice with which his memory has been charged: it is evident enough, that if his biographer could have discovered more, he would not have spared him. As a poet, he has treated him with severity enough, and has plucked one or two of the most beautiful feathers out of his muse's wing, and trampled them under his great foot. He has passed sentence of condemnation upon Lycidas, and has taken occasion, from that charming poem, to expose to ridicule (what is indeed ridiculous enough) the childish prattlement of pastoral compositions, as if Lycidas was the prototype and pattern of them all. The liveliness of the description, the sweetness of the numbers, the classical spirit of antiquity, that prevails in it, go for nothing. I am convinced, by the way, that he has no ear for poetical numbers, or that it was stopped, by prejudice, against the harmony of Milton's. Was there ever any thing so delightful as the music of the Paradise Lost? It is like that of a fine organ; has the fullest and the deepest tones of majesty, with all the softness and elegance of the Dorian flute. Variety without end, and never equalled, unless perhaps by Virgil. Yet the doctor has little, or nothing, to say upon this copious theme; but talks something about the unfitness of the English language for blank verse, and how apt it is in the mouth of some readers, to degenerate into declamation.

I could talk a good while longer, but I have no room; our love attends you. Yours affectionately.

LETTER X.

To the Rev. John Newton.

May 3, 1780.

Dear sir,

You indulge in such a variety of subjects, and allow me such a latitude of excursion in this scribbling employment, that I have no excuse for silence. I am much obliged to you for swallowing such boluses as I send you, for the sake of my gilding, and verily believe, I am the only man alive from whom they would be welcome to a palate like yours. I

wish I could make them more splendid than they are, more alluring to the eye, at least, if not more pleasing to the taste; but my leaf-gold is tarnished, and has received such a tinge from the vapours that are ever brooding over my mind, that I think it no small proof of your partiality to me, that you will read my letters. I am not fond of long-winded metaphors; I have always observed, that they halt at the latter end of their progress, and so does mine. I deal much in ink indeed, but not such ink as is employed by poets, and writers of essays. Mine is a harmless fluid, and guilty of no deceptions, but such as may prevail, without the least injury to the person imposed on. I draw mountains, valleys, woods, and streams, and ducks, and dabchicks. I admire them myself, and Mrs. Unwin admires them; and her praise and my praise, put together, are fame enough for me. Oh! I could spend whole days, and moonlight nights, in feeding upon a lovely prospect: My eyes drink the rivers as they flow. If every human being upon earth could think for one quarter of an hour, as I have done for many years, there might, perhaps, be many miserable men among them, but not an awakened one would be found, from the Arctic to the Antarctic circle. At present, the difference between them and me is greatly to their advantage. I delight in baubles, and know them to be so; for rested in, and viewed without a reference to their Author, what is the earth, what are the planets, what is the sun itself, but a bauble? Better for a man never to have seen them, or to see them with the eyes of a brute, stupid and unconscious of what he beholds, than not to be able to say, "The maker of all these wonders is my friend!" Their eyes have never been opened, to see that they are trifles; mine have been, and will be till they are closed for ever. They think a fine estate, a large conservatory, a hot-house, rich as a West-Indian garden, things of consequence; visit them with pleasure, and muse upon them with ten times more. I am pleased with a frame of four lights, doubtful whether the few pines it contains will ever be worth a farthing; amuse myself with a green-house which lord Bute's gardener could take upon his back, and walk away with; and when I have paid it the accustomed visit, and watered it, and given it air, I say to myself—"This is not mine; 'tis a plaything lent me for the present; I must leave it soon."

LETTER XI.

To Mrs. Cowper.

May 10, 1780.

My dear cousin,

I DO not write to comfort you; that office is not likely to be well performed by one who has no comfort for himself; nor to comply with an impertinent ceremony, which in general might well be spared upon such occasions: but because I would not seem indifferent to the concerns of those I have so much reason to esteem and love. If I did not sorrow for your brother's death, I should expect that nobody would for mine; when I knew him, he was much beloved, and, I doubt not, continued to be so. To live and die together is the lot of a few happy families, who hardly know what a separation means, and one sepulchre serves them all; but the ashes of our kindred are dispersed indeed. Whether the American gulph has swallowed up any other of my relations, I know not; it has made many mourners.

Believe me, my dear cousin, though after a long silence, which perhaps nothing less than the present concern could have prevailed

with me to interrupt, as much as ever, your affectionate kinsman.

LETTER XII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

July 27, 1780.

My dear friend,

As two men sit silent, after having exhausted all their topics of conversation; one says, "It is very fine weather;" and the other says, "Yes;" one blows his nose, and the other rubs his eye-brows (by the way, this is very much in Homer's manner); such seems to be the case between you and me. After a silence of some days, I wrote you a long something, that (I suppose) was nothing to the purpose, because it has not afforded you materials for an answer. Nevertheless, as it often happens in the case above stated, one of the distressed parties, being deeply sensible of the awkwardness of a dumb duet, breaks silence again, and resolves to speak, though he has nothing to say; so it fares with me. I am with you again in the form of an epistle, though, considering my present emptiness, I have reason to fear that your only joy upon the occasion will be, that it is conveyed to you in a frank.

When I began, I expected no interruption. But if I had expected interruptions without end, I should have been less disappointed. First came the barber; who, after having embellished the outside of my head, has left the inside just as unfurnished as he found it. Then came Olney bridge, not into the house, but into the conversation. The cause relating to it was tried on Tuesday at Buckingham. The judge directed the jury to find a verdict favourable to Olney. The jury consisted of one knave, and eleven fools. The last mentioned followed the afore mentioned, as sheep follow a bell-wether, and decided in direct opposition to the said judge. Then a flaw was discovered in the indictment. The indictment was quashed, and an order made for a new trial. The new trial will be in the King's Bench, where said knave and said fools will have nothing to do with it. So the men of Olney fling up their caps, and assure themselves of a complete victory. A victory will save me and your mother many shillings, perhaps some pounds, which, except that it has afforded me a subject to write upon, was the only reason why I said so much about it. I know you take an interest in all that concerns us, and will consequently rejoice with us, in the prospect of an event in which we are concerned so nearly. Yours affectionately.

LETTER XIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Aug. 6, 1780.

My dear friend,

You like to hear from me. This is a very good reason why I should write; but I have nothing to say. This seems equally a good reason why I should not; yet if you had alighted from your horse at our door this morning, and at this present writing, being five o'clock in the afternoon, had found occasion to say to me; "Mr. Cowper, you have not spoke since I came in, have you resolved never to speak again?" it would be but a poor reply, if, in answer to the summons, I should plead inability as my best and only excuse. And this, by the way, suggests to me a seasonable piece of instruction, and reminds me of what I am very apt to forget, when I have any epistolary business in hand; that a letter may be written upon any

thing or nothing, just as that any thing or nothing happens to occur. A man that has a journey before him twenty miles in length, which he is to perform on foot, will not hesitate, and doubt, whether he shall set out or not, because he does not readily conceive how he shall ever reach the end of it; for he knows, that by the simple operation of moving one foot forward first, and then the other, he shall be sure to accomplish it. So it is in the present case, and so it is in every similar case. A letter is written as a conversation is maintained, or a journey performed, not by preconcerted or premeditated means, a new contrivance, or an invention never heard of before; but merely by maintaining a progress, and resolving, as a postilion does, having once set out, never to stop, till we reach the appointed end. If a man may talk without thinking, why may he not write upon the same terms? A grave gentleman of the last century, a tie-wig, square-toe, Steinkirk figure, would say; "My good sir, a man has no right to do either." But it is to be hoped, that the present century has nothing to do with the mouldy opinions of the last; and so good Sir Launcelot, or Sir Paul, or whatever be your name, step into your picture-frame again, and look as if you thought for another century, and leave us moderns in the mean time to think when we can, and to write whether we can or not, else we might as well be dead as you are.

When we look back upon our forefathers, we seem to look back upon the people of another nation, almost upon creatures of another species. Their vast rambling mansions, spacious halls, and painted casements, the gothic porch smothered with honeysuckles, their little gardens, and high walls, their box-edgings, balls of holly, and yew-tree statues, are become so entirely unfashionable now, that we can hardly believe it possible, that a people, who resembled us so little in their taste, should resemble us in any thing else. But in every thing else, I suppose, they were our counterparts exactly; and time, that has sewed up the slashed sleeve, and reduced the large trunk hose to a neat pair of silk stockings, has left human nature just where it found it. The inside of the man at least has undergone no change. His passions, appetites, and aims, are just what they ever were. They wear perhaps a handsomer disguise than they did in days of yore; for philosophy and literature will have their effect upon the exterior; but, in every other respect, a modern is only an ancient in a different dress. Yours.

LETTER XIV.

To Mrs. Cowper.

Aug. 31, 1780.

My dear cousin,

I AM obliged to you for your long letter, which did not seem so, and for your short one, which was more than I had any reason to expect. Short as it was, it conveyed to me two interesting articles of intelligence; an account of your recovering from a fever, and of lady Cowper's death. The latter was, I suppose, to be expected; for by what remembrance I have of her ladyship, who was never much acquainted with her, she had reached those years, that are always found upon the borders of another world. As for you, your time of life is comparatively of a youthful date. You may think of death as much as you please (you cannot think of it too much), but I hope you will live to think of it many years.

It costs me not much difficulty to suppose, that my friends, who were already grown old when I saw them last, are old still; but it costs me a

good deal sometimes to think of those, who were at that time young, as being older than they were. Not having been an eye-witness of the change that time has made in them, and my former idea of them not being corrected by observation, it remains the same; my memory presents me with this image unimpaired, and, while it retains the resemblance of what they were, forgets that, by this time, the picture may have lost much of its likeness, through the alteration that succeeding years have made in the original. I know not what impressions Time may have made upon your person, for while his claws (as our grannams called them) strike deep furrows in some faces, he seems to sheath them with much tenderness, as if fearful of doing injury, to others. But though an enemy to the person, he is a friend to the mind, and you have found him so. Though, even in this respect, his treatment of us depends upon what he meets with at our hands; if we use him well, and listen to his admonitions, he is a friend indeed; but otherwise the worst of enemies, who takes from us daily something that we valued, and gives us nothing better in its stead. It is well with them who, like you, can stand a tiptoe on the mountain-top of human life, look down with pleasure upon the valley they have passed, and sometimes stretch their wings in joyful hope of a happy flight into eternity. Yet a little while, and your hope will be accomplished.

When you can favour me with a little account of your own family, without inconvenience, I shall be glad to receive it; for though separated from my kindred by little more than half a century of miles, I know as little of their concerns as if oceans and continents were interposed between us. Yours, my dear cousin.

LETTER XV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Sept. 3, 1780.

My dear friend,

I AM glad you are so provident, and that while you are young you have furnished yourself with the means of comfort in old age. Your crutch and your pipe may be of use to you (and may they be so), should your years be extended to an antediluvian date; and for your perfect accommodation, you seem to want nothing but a clerk called Snuffle, and a sexton of the name of Skeleton, to make your ministerial equipage complete.

I think I have read as much of the first volume of the Biographia as I shall ever read. I find it very amusing; more so perhaps than it would have been had they sifted their characters with more exactness, and admitted none but those who had in some way or other entitled themselves to immortality, by deserving well of the public. Such a compilation would perhaps have been more judicious, though I confess it would have afforded less variety. The priests and monks of earlier, and the doctors of later days, who have signalized themselves by nothing but a controversial pamphlet, long since thrown by, and never to be perused again, might have been forgotten, without injury, or loss to the national character for learning or genius. This observation suggested to me the following lines, which may serve to illustrate my meaning, and at the same time to give my criticism a sprightlier air.

Oh fond attempt to give a deathless lot
To names ignoble, born to be forgot;
In vain, recorded in historic page,
They court the notice of a future age;
Those twinkling, tiny, lustres of the land,
Drop one by one, from Fame's neglecting hand;

Lethean gulphs receive them as they fall,
And dark oblivion soon absorbs them all.
So when a child (as playful children use)
Has burnt to cinder a stale last year's news,
The flame extinct, he views the roving fire,
There goes my lady, and there goes the 'squire,
There goes the parson—Oh illustrious spark!
And there—scarce less illustrious—goes the clerk.

Virgil admits none but worthies into the Elysian fields; I cannot recollect the lines in which he describes them all, but these in particular I well remember:

Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo,
*Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes.**

A chaste and scrupulous conduct, like his, would well become the writer of national biography. But enough of this.

Our respects attend Miss Shuttleworth, with many thanks for her intended present. Some purses derive all their value from their contents, but these will have an intrinsic value of their own; and though mine should be often empty, which is not an improbable supposition, I shall still esteem it highly on its own account.

If you could meet with a second-hand Virgil, ditto Homer, both Iliad and Odyssey, together with a Clavis, for I have no Lexicon, and all tolerably cheap, I shall be obliged to you if you will make the purchase. Yours.

LETTER XVI.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

Feb. 15, 1781.

My dear friend,

I AM glad you were pleased with my report of so extraordinary a case. If the thought of versifying the decisions of our courts of justice had struck me while I had the honour to attend them, it would perhaps have been no difficult matter to have compiled a volume of such amusing and interesting precedents; which, if they wanted the eloquence of the Greek or Roman oratory, would have amply compensated that deficiency by the harmony of rhyme and metre.

Your account of my uncle and your mother gave me great pleasure. I have long been afraid to inquire after some, in whose welfare I always feel myself interested, lest the question should produce a painful answer. Longevity is the lot of so few, and is so seldom rendered comfortable by the associations of good health and good spirits, that I could not very reasonably suppose, either your relations or mine so happy in those respects, as it seems they are. May they continue to enjoy those blessings so long as the date of life shall last! I do not think that in these coster-monger days, as I have a notion Falstaff calls them, an antediluvian age is at all a desirable thing; but to live comfortably, while we do live, is a great matter, and comprehends in it every thing that can be wished for on this side the curtain that hangs between time and eternity.

Farewell, my better friend than any I have to boast of either among the Lords, or gentlemen of the House of Commons.

LETTER XVII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

June 24, 1781.

My dear friend,

THE letter you withheld so long, lest it should give me pain, gave me pleasure. Horace says, The poets are a waspish race; and from my own experience of the temper of two or three, with whom I was formerly connected, I can readily subscribe to the character he gives them. But,

* Those who to worth their bounty did extend,
And those who knew that bounty to commend,
And searching into more mechanic parts,
Who graced their age with new invented arts.
DRYDEN.

for my own part, I have never yet felt that excessive irritability, which some writers discover, when a friend, in the words of Pope,

"Just hints a fault, or hesitates dislike."

Least of all I would give way to such an unseasonable ebullition, merely because a civil question is proposed to me, with such gentleness, and by a man whose concern for my credit and character I verily believe to be sincere. I reply therefore, not peevishly, but with a sense of the kindness of your intentions, that I hope you may make yourself very easy on a subject that I can perceive has occasioned you some solicitude. When I wrote the poem called Truth, it was indispensably necessary that I should set forth that doctrine which I know to be true, and that I should pass what I understood to be a just censure upon opinions and persuasions, that differ from, or stand in direct opposition to it; because, though some errors may be innocent, and even religious errors are not always pernicious, yet, in a case where the faith and hope of a Christian are concerned, they must necessarily be destructive; and because, neglecting this, I should have betrayed this subject; either suppressing what, in my judgment, is of the last importance, or giving countenance, by a timid silence, to the very evils it was my design to combat. That you may understand me better, I will subjoin, that I wrote that poem on purpose to inculcate the eleemosynary character of the Gospel, as a dispensation of mercy, in the most absolute sense of the word, to the exclusion of all claims of merit on the part of the receiver; consequently to set the brand of invalidity upon the plea of works, and to discover, upon scriptural ground, the absurdity of that notion, which includes a solecism in the very terms of it, that man, by repentance and good works, may deserve the mercy of his Maker. I call it a solecism, because mercy deserved ceases to be mercy, and must take the name of justice. This is the opinion, which I said in my last the world would not acquiesce in; but, except this, I do not recollect that I have introduced a syllable into any of my pieces that they can possibly object to; and even this I have endeavoured to deliver from doctrinal dryness, by as many pretty things, in the way of trinket and plaything, as I could muster upon the subject. So that, if I have rubbed their gums, I have taken care to do it with a coral, and even that coral embellished by the ribbon to which it is tied, and recommended by the tinkling of all the bells I could contrive to annex to it.

You need not trouble yourself to call on Johnson; being perfectly acquainted with the progress of the business, I am able to satisfy your curiosity myself. The post before the last, I returned to him the second sheet of Table-Talk, which he had sent me for correction, and which stands foremost in the volume. The delay has enabled me to add a piece of considerable length; which, but for the delay, would not have made its appearance upon this occasion; it answers to the name of Hope.

I remember a line in the Odyssey, which, literally translated, imports, that there is nothing in the world more impudent than the belly. But had Homer met with an instance of modesty like yours, he would either have suppressed that observation, or at least have qualified it with an exception. I hope that, for the future, Mrs. Unwin will never suffer you to go to London without putting some victuals in your pocket; for what a strange article would it make in a newspaper, that a tall, well-dressed gentleman, by his appearance a clergyman, and with a purse of gold in his pocket, was found starved to death

in the street. How would it puzzle conjecture to account for such a phenomenon! Some would suppose that you had been kidnapped, like Betty Canning, of hungry memory: others would say, The gentleman was a Methodist, and had practised a rigorous self-denial, which had unhappily proved too hard for his constitution: but I will venture to say, that nobody would divine the real cause, or suspect for a moment, that your modesty had occasioned the tragedy in question. By the way, is it not possible, that the spareness and slenderness of your person may be owing to the same cause? for surely it is reasonable to suspect, that the bashfulness, which could prevail against you, on so trying an occasion, may be equally prevalent on others. I remember having been told by Colman, that when he once dined with Garrick, he repeatedly pressed him to eat more of a certain dish that he was known to be particularly fond of; Colman as often refused, and at last declared he could not; "But could not you," says Garrick, "if you was in a dark closet by yourself?" The same question might perhaps be put to you, with as much or more propriety; and therefore I recommend it to you, either to furnish yourself with a little more assurance, or always to eat in the dark.

We sympathize with Mrs. Unwin, and, if it will be any comfort to her to know it, can assure her, that a lady in our neighbourhood is always, on such occasions, the most miserable of all things, and yet escapes with great facility, through all the dangers of her state. Yours, *ut semper.*

LETTER XVIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Oct. 6, 1781.

My dear friend,

WHAT a world are you daily conversant with, which I have not seen these twenty years, and shall never see again! The arts of dissipation (I suppose) are no where practised with more refinement or success, than at the place of your present residence. By your account of it, it seems to be just what it was when I visited it,—a scene of idleness and luxury, music, dancing, cards, walking, riding, bathing, eating, drinking, coffee, tea, scandal, dressing, yawning, sleeping; the rooms perhaps more magnificent, because the proprietors are grown richer, but the manners and occupations of the company just the same. Though my life has long been like that of a recluse, I have not the temper of one, nor am I in the least an enemy to cheerfulness and good humour; but I cannot envy you your situation: I even feel myself constrained to prefer the silence of this nook, and the snug fire-side in our own diminutive parlour, to all the splendour and gaiety of Brighton.

You ask me how I feel on the occasion of my approaching publication? Perfectly at my ease. If I had not been pretty well assured before-hand, that my tranquillity would be but little endangered by such a measure, I would never have engaged in it; for I cannot bear disturbance. I have had in view two principal objects; first to amuse myself; and secondly, to compass that point in such a manner, that others might possibly be the better for my amusement. If I have succeeded, it will give me pleasure; but if I have failed, I shall not be mortified to the degree that might perhaps be expected. I remember an old adage (though not where it is to be found), "*bene vixit, qui bene latuit;*"* and if I had recollected it at the right time, it should have been the motto to my book. By the way it will make an excellent one for Retirement, if you

* He has lived well, who has hid himself well.

can but tell me whom to quote for it. The critics cannot deprive me of the pleasure I have in reflecting, that so far as my leisure has been employed in writing for the public, it has been conscientiously employed, and with a view to their advantage. There is nothing agreeable, to be sure, in being chronicled for a dunce; but, I believe, there lives not a man upon earth who would be less affected by it than myself. With all this indifference to fame, which you know me too well to suppose me capable of affecting, I have taken the utmost pains to deserve it. This may appear a mystery, or a paradox in practice; but it is true. I considered that the taste of the day is refined, and delicate to excess; and that to disgust that delicacy of taste, by a slovenly inattention to it, would be to forfeit, at once, all hope of being useful; and for this reason, though I have written more verse this last year than perhaps any man in England, I have finished, and polished, and touched and retouched, with the utmost care. If, after all, I should be converted into waste paper, it may be my misfortune, but it shall not be my fault. I shall bear it with the most perfect serenity.

I do not mean to give —— a copy: he is a good-natured little man, and crows exactly like a cock; but knows no more of verse, than the cock he imitates.

Whoever supposes that lady Austen's fortune is precarious is mistaken. I can assure you, upon the ground of the most circumstantial and authentic information, that it is both genteel and perfectly safe. Yours.

LETTER XIX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

March 7, 1782.

My dear friend,

We have great pleasure in the contemplation of your Northern journey, as it promises us a sight of you and yours by the way, and are only sorry miss Shuttleworth cannot be of the party. A line to ascertain the hour when we may expect you, by the next preceding post, will be welcome.

It is not much for my advantage, that the printer delays so long to gratify your expectation. It is a state of mind that is apt to tire and disconcert us; and there are but few pleasures that make us amends for the pain of repeated disappointment. I take it for granted you have not received the volume, not having received it myself, nor indeed heard from Johnson, since he fixed the first of the month for its publication.

What a medley are our public prints: half the page filled with the ruin of the country, and the other half filled with the vices and pleasures of it—here is an island taken, and there a new comedy—here an empire lost, and there an Italian opera, or a lord's rout on a Sunday.

"May it please your lordship! I am an Englishman, and must stand or fall with the nation. Religion, its true palladium, has been stolen away; and it is crumbling into dust. Sin ruins us, the sins of the great especially; and of their sins, especially the violation of the Sabbath, because it is naturally productive of all the rest. If you wish well to our arms, and would be glad to see the kingdom emerging from her ruins, pay more respect to an ordinance that deserves the deepest! I do not say, pardon this short remonstrance!—The concern I feel for my country, and the interest I have in its prosperity, gave me a right to make it. I am, &c."

Thus one might write to his lordship, and (I suppose) might be as profitably employed in whistling the tune of an old ballad.

I have no copy of the Preface, nor

do I know at present how Johnson and Mr. Newton have settled it. In the matter of it there was nothing offensively peculiar; but it was thought too pious.

Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Aug. 25, 1781.

My dear friend,

We rejoice with you sincerely in the birth of another son, and in the prospect you have of Mrs. Unwin's recovery; may your three children, and the next three, when they shall make their appearance, prove so many blessings to their parents, and make you wish that you had twice the number. But what made you expect daily that you should hear from me? Letter for letter is the law of all correspondence whatsoever; and because I wrote last, I have indulged myself for some time in expectation of a sheet from you: not that I govern myself entirely by the punctilio of reciprocation; but having been pretty much occupied of late, I was not sorry to find myself at liberty to exercise my discretion, and furnished with a good excuse, if I chose to be silent.

I expected, as you remember, to have been published last spring, and was disappointed. The delay has afforded me an opportunity to increase the quantity of my publication by about a third; and if my Muse has not forsaken me, which I rather suspect to be the case, may possibly yet add to it. I have a subject in hand which promises me a great abundance of poetical matter, but which for want of a something I am not able to describe, I cannot at present proceed with. The name of it is Retirement, and my purpose to recommend the proper improvement of it; to set forth the requisites for that end, and to enlarge upon the happiness of that state of life, when managed as it ought to be. In the course of my journey through this ample theme, I should wish to touch upon the characters, the deficiencies, and the mistakes of thousands, who enter on a scene of retirement, unqualified for it in every respect, and with such designs as have no tendency to promote either their own happiness, or that of others. But, as I have told you before, there are times when I am no more a poet than I am a mathematician; and when such a time occurs, I always think it better to give up the point, than to labour it in vain. I shall yet again be obliged to trouble you for franks. The addition of three thousand lines, or near that number, having occasioned a demand which I did not always foresee; but your obliging friend, and your obliging self, having allowed me the liberty of application, I make it without apology.

The solitude, or rather the duality of our condition at Olney, seems drawing to a conclusion. You have not forgot perhaps, that the building we inhabit consists of two mansions. And because you have only seen the inside of that part of it, which is in our occupation, I therefore inform you, that the other end of it is by far the most superb, as well as the most commodious. Lady Austen has seen it, has set her heart upon it, is going to fit it up and furnish it; and if she can get rid of the remaining two years of the lease of her London house, will probably enter upon it in a twelvemonth. You will be pleased with this intelligence, because I have already told you, that she is a woman perfectly well-bred, sensible, and in every respect agreeable; and, above all, because she loves your mother dearly. It has, in my eyes (and I doubt not it will have the same in yours), strong marks of providential

interposition. A female friend, and one who bids fair to prove herself worthy of the appellation, comes recommended by a variety of considerations, to such a place as Olney.—Since Mr. Newton went, and till this lady came, there was not in the kingdom a retirement more absolutely such than ours. We did not want company: but when it came, we found it agreeable. A person that has seen much of the world, and understands it well, has high spirits, a lively fancy, and great readiness of conversation, introduces a sprightliness into such a scene as this, which, if it was peaceful before, is not the worse for being a little enlivened. In case of illness too, to which all are liable, it was rather a gloomy prospect, if we allowed ourselves to advert to it, that there was hardly a woman in the place from whom it would have been reasonable to have expected either comfort or assistance. The present curate's wife is a valuable person, but has a family of her own, and, though a neighbour, is not a very near one. But if this plan is effected, we shall be in a manner one family, and I suppose never pass a day without some intercourses with each other.

Your mother sends her warm affections, and welcomes into the world the new-born William. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XXI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Feb. 9, 1782.

My dear friend,

I THANK you for Mr. Lowth's verses; they are so good, that had I been present when he spoke them, I should have trembled for the boy, lest the man should disappoint the hopes such early genius had given birth to. It is not common to see so lively a fancy so correctly managed, and so free from irregular exuberance; at so unexperienced an age, fruitful, yet not wanton, and gay without being tawdry. When schoolboys write verse, if they have any fire at all, it generally spends itself in flashes and transient sparks, which may indeed suggest an expectation of something better hereafter, but deserve not to be much commended for any real merit of their own. Their wit is generally forced and false, and their sublimity, if they affect any, bombast. I remember well when it was thus with me, and when a turgid, noisy, unmeaning speech in a tragedy, which I should now laugh at, afforded me raptures, and filled me with wonder. It is not, in general, till reading and observation have settled the taste, that we can give the prize to the best writing, in preference to the worst. Much less are we able to execute what is good ourselves. But Lowth seems to have stepped into excellence at once, and to have gained by intuition what we little folks are happy if we can learn at last, after much labour of our own, and instruction of others. The compliments he pays to the memory of king Charles, he would probably now retract, though he be a bishop, and his majesty's zeal for episcopacy was one of the causes of his ruin. An age or two must pass before some characters can be properly understood. The spirit of party employs itself in veiling their faults, and ascribing to them virtues which they never possessed. See Charles's face, drawn by Clarendon, and it is a handsome portrait. See it more justly exhibited by Mrs. Macauley, and it is deformed to a degree that shocks us. Every feature expresses cunning, employing itself in the maintaining of tyranny and dissimulation, pretending itself an advocate for truth.

My letters have already apprised you, of that close and intimate con-

nexion that took place between the lady you visited in Queen Anne's Street and us. Nothing could be more promising, though sudden in the commencement. She treated us with as much unreservedness of communication, as if we had been born in the same house, and educated together. At her departure, she herself proposed a correspondence; and because writing does not agree with your mother, proposed a correspondence with me. By her own desire, I wrote to her under the assumed relation of a brother, and she to me as my sister.

I thank you for the search you have made after my intended motto, but I no longer need it.

Our love is always with yourself and family. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XXII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

March 18, 1782.

My dear friend,

Nothing has given me so much pleasure, since the publication of my volume, as your favourable opinion of it. It may possibly meet with acceptance from hundreds, whose commendation would afford me no other satisfaction, than what I should find in the hope that it might do them good. I have some neighbours in this place, who say they like it—doubtless I would rather they should, than that they should not—but I know them to be persons of no more taste in poetry than skill in the mathematics; their applause, therefore, is a sound that has no music in it for me. But my vanity was not so entirely quiescent when I read your friendly account of the manner it had affected *you*. It was tickled and pleased; and told me in a pretty loud whisper, that others perhaps, of whose taste and judgment I had a high opinion, would approve it too. As a giver of good counsel, I wish to please all; as an author, I am perfectly indifferent to the judgment of all, except the few who are indeed judicious. The circumstance, however, in your letter which pleased me most, was, that you wrote in high spirits, and though you said much, suppressed more, lest you should hurt my delicacy—my delicacy is obliged to you—but you observe it is not so squeamish, but that after it has feasted upon praise expressed, it can find a comfortable dessert in the contemplation of praise implied. I now feel as if I should be glad to begin another volume; but from the will to the power is a step too wide for me to take at present; and the season of the year brings with it so many avocations in the garden, where I am my own *fac totum*, that I have little or no leisure for the quill. I should do myself much wrong were I to omit mentioning the great complacency with which I read your narrative of Mrs. Unwin's smiles and tears: persons of much sensibility are always persons of taste; and a taste for poetry depends indeed upon that very article more than upon any other. If she had Aristotle by heart, I should not esteem her judgment so highly, were she defective in point of feeling, as I do, and must esteem it, knowing her to have such feelings as Aristotle could not communicate, and as half the readers in the world are destitute of. This it is that makes me set so high a price upon your mother's opinion. She is a critic by nature, and not by rule, and has a perception of what is good or bad in composition, that I never knew deceive her; insomuch, that when two sorts of expression have pleaded equally for the precedence, in my own esteem, and I have referred, as in such cases I always did, the decision of the point to her, I never knew her at a loss for a just one.

Whether I shall receive any an-

swer from his chancellorship, or not, is at present *in ambiguo*, and will probably continue in the same state of ambiguity much longer. He is so busy a man, and at this time, if the papers may be credited, so particularly busy, that I am forced to mortify myself with the thought, that both my book and my letter may be thrown into a corner, as too insignificant for a statesman's notice, and never found till his executor finds them. This affair, however, is neither at my *libitum** nor his. I have sent him the truth. He that put it into the heart of a certain Eastern monarch to amuse himself one sleepless night with listening to the records of his kingdom, is able to give birth to such another occasion, and inspire his lordship with a curiosity to know what he has received from a friend he once loved and valued. If an answer comes, however, you shall not long be a stranger to the contents of it.

I have read your letter to their worships, and much approve of it.—May it have the desired effect it ought! If not, still you have acted a humane and becoming part; and the poor aching toes and fingers of the prisoners will not appear in judgment against you. I have made a slight alteration in the last sentence, which perhaps you will not disapprove. Yours ever.

LETTER XXIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

April 1, 1782.

My dear friend,

I COULD not have found a better trumpeter. Your zeal to serve the interest of my volume, together with your extensive acquaintance, qualify you perfectly for that most useful office. Methinks I see you with the long tube at your mouth proclaiming to your numerous connexions my poetical merits, and at proper intervals levelling it at Olney, and pouring into my ear the welcome sound of their approbation. I need not encourage you to proceed, your breath will never fail in such a cause; and thus encouraged, I myself perhaps may proceed also; and when the versifying fit returns, produce another volume. Alas! we shall never receive such commendations from him on the woolsack, as your good friend has lavished upon us. Whence I learn, that however important I may be in my own eyes, I am very insignificant in his. To make me amends, however, for this mortification, Mr. Newton tells me, that my book is likely to run, spread, and prosper; that the grave cannot help smiling, and the gay are struck with the truth of it: and that it is likely to find its way into his majesty's hands, being put into a proper course for that purpose. Now if the king should fall in love with my Muse, and with you for her sake, such an event would make us ample amends for the chancellor's indifference, and you might be the first divine that ever reached a mitre, from the shoulders of a poet. But (I believe) we must be content, I with my gains, if I gain any thing, and you with the pleasure of knowing that I am a gainer.

We laughed heartily at your answer to little John's question; and yet I think you might have given him a direct answer—"There are various sorts of cleverness, my dear; I do not know that mine lies in the poetical way, but I can do ten times more towards the entertainment of company, in the way of conversation, than our friend at Olney. He can rhyme, and I can rattle. If he had my talent, or I had his, we should be too charming, and the world would almost adore us." Yours.

* Will.

LETTER XXIV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

June 12, 1782.

My dear friend,

Every extraordinary occurrence in our lives affords us an opportunity to learn, if we will, something more of our own hearts and tempers than we were before aware of. It is easy to promise ourselves beforehand, that our conduct shall be wise, or moderate, or resolute, on any given occasion. But when that occasion occurs, we do not always find it easy to make good the promise: such a difference there is between theory and practice. Perhaps this is no new remark; but it is not a whit the worse for being old, if it be true.

Before I had published, I said to myself—You and I, Mr. Cowper, will not concern ourselves much about what the critics may say of our book. But having once sent my wits for a venture, I soon became anxious about the issue, and found that I could not be satisfied with a warm place in my own good graces, unless my friends were pleased with me as much as I pleased myself. Meeting with their approbation, I began to feel the workings of ambition. It is well, said I, that my friends are pleased, but friends are sometimes partial; and mine, I have reason to think, are not altogether free from bias. Methinks I should like to hear a stranger or two speak well of me. I was presently gratified by the approbation of the London Magazine, and the Gentleman's, particularly by that of the former, and by the plaudit of Dr. Franklin. By the way, magazines are publications we have but little respect for, till we ourselves are chronicled in them; and then they assume an importance in our esteem, which before we could not allow them. But the Monthly Review, the most formidable of all my judges, is still behind. What will that critical Rhadamanthus say, when my shivering genius shall appear before him? Still he keeps me in hot water, and I must wait another month for his award. Alas! when I wish for a favourable sentence from that quarter (to confess a weakness, that I should not confess to all), I feel myself not a little influenced by a tender regard to my reputation here, even among my neighbours at Olney. Here are watch-makers, who themselves are wits, and who at present, perhaps, think me one. Here is a carpenter, and a baker; and, not to mention others, here is your idol, Mr. ——, whose smile is fame. All these read the Monthly Review, and all these will set me down for a dunce, if those terrible critics should show them the example. But oh! wherever else I am accounted dull, dear Mr. Griffith, let me pass for a genius at Olney.

We are sorry for little William's illness. It is however the privilege of infancy, to recover, almost immediately, what it has lost by sickness. We are sorry, too, for Mr. ——'s dangerous condition; but he that is well prepared for the great journey cannot enter on it too soon for himself, though his friends will weep at his departure. Yours.

LETTER XXV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

July 16, 1782.

My dear friend,

Though some people pretend to be clever in the way of prophetical forecast, and to have a peculiar talent of sagacity, by which they can divine the meaning of a providential dispensation, while its consequences

are yet in embryo—I do not. There is at this time to be found, I suppose, in the Cabinet, and in both Houses, a greater assemblage of able men, both as speakers and counsellors, than ever were contemporary in the same land. A man, not accustomed to trace the workings of Providence as recorded in Scripture, and that has given no attention to this particular subject, while employed in the study of profane history, would assert boldly, that it is a token for good, that much may be expected from them, and that the country, though heavily afflicted, is not yet to be despaired of, distinguished as she is by so many characters of the highest class. Thus he would say; and I do not deny, that the event might justify his skill in prognostics. God works by means; and in a case of great national perplexity and distress, wisdom and political ability seem to be the only natural means of deliverance. But a mind more religiously inclined, and perhaps a little tinctured with melancholy, might, with equal probability of success, hazard a conjecture directly opposite. Alas! what is the wisdom of man, especially when he trusts in it as the only God of his confidence?—When I consider the general contempt that is poured upon all things sacred, the profusion, the dissipation, the knavish cunning of some, the rapacity of others, and the impenitence of all, I am rather inclined to fear, that God, who honours himself by bringing human glory to shame, and by disappointing the expectations of those whose trust is in creatures, has signalized the present day as a day of much human sufficiency and strength, has brought together from all quarters of the land the most illustrious men to be found in it, only that he may prove the vanity of idols; and that when a great empire is falling, and he has pronounced a sentence of ruin against it, the inhabitants, be they weak or strong, wise or foolish, must fall with it. I am rather confirmed in this persuasion by observing, that these luminaries of the state had no sooner fixed themselves in the political heaven, than the fall of the brightest of them shook all the rest. The arch of their power was no sooner struck, than the key-stone slipt out of its place; those that were closest in connexion with it followed, and the whole building, new as it is, seems to be already a ruin. If a man should hold this language, who could convict him of absurdity? The marquis of Rockingham is minister; all the world rejoices, anticipating success in war, and a glorious peace. The marquis of Rockingham is dead; all the world is afflicted, and relapses into its former despondence. What does this prove, but that the marquis was their Almighty, and that now he is gone, they know no other? But let us wait a little, they will find another. Perhaps the duke of Portland, or perhaps the unpopular ——, whom they now represent as a devil, may obtain that honour. Thus God is forgot; and when he is, his judgments are generally his remembrancers.

How shall I comfort you upon the subject of your present distress? Pardon me that I find myself obliged to smile at it; because who but yourself would be distressed upon such an occasion? You have behaved politely and like a gentleman, you have hospitably offered your house to a stranger, who could not, in your neighbourhood at least, have been comfortably accommodated any where else. He, by neither refusing nor accepting an offer that did him too much honour, has disgraced himself, but not you. I think for the future you must be more cautious of laying yourself open to a stranger,

and never again expose yourself to incivilities from an archdeacon you are not acquainted with.

Though I did not mention it, I felt with you what you suffered by the loss of Miss ——; I was only silent because I could minister no consolation to you on such a subject, but what I knew your mind to be already stored with. Indeed the application of comfort in such cases is a nice business, and perhaps when best managed, might as well be let alone. I remember reading, many years ago, a long treatise on the subject of consolation, written in French, the author's name I forget, but I wrote these words in the margin :— Special consolation! at least for a Frenchman, who is a creature the most easily comforted of any in the world!

We are as happy in lady Austen, and she in us, as ever; having a lively imagination, and being passionately desirous of consolidating all into one family (for she has taken her leave of London), she has just sprung a project which serves, at least, to amuse us, and to make us laugh; it is to hire Mr. Small's house, on the top of Clifton hill, which is large, commodious, and handsome, will hold us conveniently, and any friends who may occasionally favour us with a visit; the house is furnished, but if it can be hired without the furniture, will let for a trifle; your sentiments if you please upon this *demarche!**

I send you my last frank; our best love attends you individually, and altogether. I give you joy of a happy change in the season, and myself also. I have filled four sides in less time than two would have cost me a week ago; such is the effect of sunshine upon such a butterfly as I am. Yours.

* Step.

LETTER XXVI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Nov. 18, 1782.

My dear William,

On the part of the poor, and on our part, be pleased to make acknowledgments, such as the occasion calls for, to our beneficial friend Mr. ——. I call him ours, because having experienced his kindness to myself in a former instance, and in the present his disinterested readiness to succour the distressed, my ambition will be satisfied with nothing less. He may depend upon the strictest secrecy; no creature shall hear him mentioned, either now or hereafter, as the person from whom we have received this bounty. But when I speak of him, or hear him spoken of by others, which sometimes happens, I shall not forget what is due to so rare a character. I wish, and your mother wishes it too, that he could sometimes take us in his way to ——; he will find us happy to receive a person, whom we must needs account it an honour to know. We shall exercise our best discretion in the disposal of the money; but in this town, where the Gospel has been preached so many years, where the people have been favoured so long with laborious and conscientious ministers, it is not an easy thing to find those who make no profession of religion at all, and are yet proper objects of charity. The profane are so profane, so drunken, dissolute, and, in every respect, worthless, that to make them partakers of his bounty, would be to abuse it.—We promise, however, that none shall touch it but such as are miserably poor, yet at the same time industrious and honest, two characters frequently united here, where the most watchful and unremitting labour will hardly procure them bread. We make none

but the cheapest laces, and the price of them is fallen almost to nothing. Thanks are due to yourself likewise, and are hereby accordingly rendered, for waving your claim in behalf of your own parishioners. You are always with them, and they are always, at least some of them, the better for your residence among them. Olney is a populous place, inhabited chiefly by the half-starved and the ragged of the earth; and it is not possible for our small party, and small ability, to extend their operations so far as to be much felt among such numbers. Accept, therefore, your share of their gratitude, and be convinced, that when they pray for a blessing upon those who relieved their wants, He that answers that prayer, and when he answers it, will remember his servant at Stock.

I little thought when I was writing the history of John Gilpin, that he would appear in print. I intended to laugh, and to make two or three others laugh, of whom you were one. But now all the world laugh, at least if they have the same relish for a tale ridiculous in itself, and quaintly told, as we have. Well—they do not always laugh so innocently, and at so small an expense—for in a world like this, abounding with subjects for satire, and with satirical wits to mark them, a laugh that hurts nobody has at least the grace of novelty to recommend it. Swift's darling motto was, *Vive la bagatelle*—a good wish for a philosopher of his complexion, the greater part of whose wisdom, whencesoever it came, most certainly came not from above. *La bagatelle* has no enemy in me, though it has neither so warm a friend, nor so able a one, as it had in him. If I trifle, and merely trifle, it is because I am reduced to it by necessity—a melancholy that nothing else so effectually disperses, engages me sometimes in the arduous task of being merry by force. And, strange as it may seem, the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote, have been written in the saddest mood, and, but for that saddest mood, perhaps had never been written at all.

I hear, from Mrs. Newton, that some great persons have spoken with great approbation of a certain book. Who they are, and what they have said, I am to be told in a future letter. The Monthly Reviewers, in the mean time, have satisfied me well enough. Yours, my dear William.

LETTER XXVII.

To the Rev. John Newton.

April 5, 1785.

My dear friend,

WHEN one has a letter to write, there is nothing more useful than to make a beginning. In the first place, because unless it be begun, there is no good reason to hope it will ever be ended; and, secondly, because the beginning is half the business, it being much more difficult to put the pen in motion at first, than to continue the progress of it, when once moved.

Mrs. C——'s illness, likely to prove mortal, and seizing her at such a time, has excited much compassion in my breast, and in Mrs. Unwin's, both for her and her daughter. To have parted with a child she loves so much, intending soon to follow her; to find herself arrested before she could set out, and at so great a distance from her most valued relations, her daughter's life, too, threatened by a disorder not often curable; are circumstances truly affecting. She has indeed much natural fortitude, and, to make her condition still more tolerable, a good Christian hope for her support. But so it is, that the distresses of those, who least need our pity, excite it most; the amiable-

ness of the character engages our sympathy, and we mourn for persons for whom perhaps we might more reasonably rejoice. There is still, however, a possibility that she may recover; an event we *must* wish for, though for her to depart would be far better. Thus we would always withhold from the skies those who alone can reach them, at least till we are ready to bear them company.

Present our love, if you please, to miss C——. I saw in the Gentleman's Magazine for last month, an account of a physician who has discovered a new method of treating consumptive cases, which has succeeded wonderfully in the trial. He finds the seat of the distemper in the stomach, and cures it principally by emetics. The old method of encountering the disorder has proved so unequal to the task, that I should be much inclined to any new practice that comes well recommended. He is spoken of as a sensible and judicious man, but his name I have forgot.

Our love to all under your roof, and in particular to miss Catlett, if she is with you. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XXVIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

June 8, 1783.

My dear William,

Our severest winter, commonly called the spring, is now over, and I find myself seated in my favourite recess, the green-house. In such a situation, so silent, so shady, where no human foot is heard, and where only my myrtles presume to peep in at the window, you may suppose I have no interruption to complain of, and that my thoughts are perfectly at my command. But the beauties of the spot are themselves an interruption, my attention being called upon by those very myrtles, by a double row of grass pinks, just beginning to blossom, and by a bed of beans already in bloom; and you are to consider it, if you please, as no small proof of my regard, that though you have so many powerful rivals, I disengage myself from them all, and devote this hour entirely to you.

You are not acquainted with the rev. Mr. Bull, of Newport; perhaps it is as well for you that you are not. You would regret still more than you do, that there are so many miles interposed between us. He spends part of the day with us to-morrow. A dissenter, but a liberal one; a man of letters and of genius; master of a fine imagination, or rather not master of it; an imagination, which, when he finds himself in the company he loves and can confide in, runs away with him into such fields of speculation, as amuse and enliven every other imagination that has the happiness to be of the party: at other times he has a tender and delicate sort of melancholy in his disposition, not less agreeable in its way. No men are better qualified for companions, in such a world as this, than men of such a temperament. Every scene of life has two sides, a dark and a bright one; and the mind, that has an equal mixture of melancholy and vivacity, is best of all qualified for the contemplation of either. He can be lively without levity, and pensive without dejection. Such a man is Mr. Bull. But—he smokes tobacco—nothing is perfect—

Nihil est ab omni
Parte beatum.

On the other side I send you a something, a song, if you please, composed last Thursday—the incident happened the day before.*—Yours.

* Here followed his song of the Rose.

LETTER XXIX.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Oct. 6, 1783.

My dear friend,

IT is indeed a melancholy consideration, that the Gospel, whose direct tendency is to promote the happiness of mankind, in the present as well as in the life to come, and which so effectually answers the design of its Author, whenever it is well understood and sincerely believed, should, through the ignorance, the bigotry, the superstition of its professors, and the ambition of popes, and princes, the tools of popes, have produced, incidentally, so much mischief; only furnishing the world with a plausible excuse to worry each other, while they sanctified the worst cause with the specious pretext of zeal for the furtherance of the best.

Angels descend from heaven to publish peace between man and his Maker—the Prince of Peace himself comes to confirm and establish it; and war, hatred, and desolation, are the consequence. Thousands quarrel about the interpretation of a book, which none of them understand. He that is slain, dies firmly persuaded, that the crown of martyrdom expects him; and he that slew him, is equally convinced that he has done God service. In reality, they are both mistaken, and equally unentitled to the honour they arrogate to themselves. If a multitude of blind men should set out for a certain city, and dispute about the right road, till a battle ensued between them, the probable effect would be, that none of them would ever reach it; and such a fray, preposterous and shocking in the extreme, would exhibit a picture in some degree resembling the original of which we have been speaking. And why is not the world thus occupied at present? even because they have exchanged a zeal, that was no better than madness, for an indifference equally pitiable and absurd. The holy sepulchre has lost its importance in the eyes of nations called Christian, not because the light of true wisdom has delivered them from a superstitious attachment to the spot, but because he that was buried in it is no longer regarded by them as the Saviour of the world.—The exercise of reason, enlightened by philosophy, has cured them indeed of the misery of an abused understanding; but together with the delusion they have lost the substance, and, for the sake of the lies that were grafted upon it, have quarrelled with the truth itself. Here, then, we see the *ne plus ultra* of human wisdom, at least in affairs of religion. It enlightens the mind with respect to non-essentials, but with respect to that in which the essence of Christianity consists, leaves it perfectly in the dark. It can discover many errors, that in different ages have disgraced the faith; but it is only to make way for the admission of one more fatal than them all, which represents that faith itself as a delusion. Why those evils have been permitted, shall be known hereafter. One thing in the mean time is certain; that the folly and frenzy of the professed disciples of the Gospel, have been more dangerous to its interests, than all the avowed hostilities of its adversaries; and perhaps for this cause these mischiefs might be suffered to prevail for a season, that its divine original and nature might be the more illustrated, when it should appear that it was able to stand its ground for ages, against that most formidable of all attacks, the indiscretion of its friends. The outrages, that have followed this perversion of the truth, have proved indeed a stumbling block to individuals; the wise of this world, with all their wisdom, have not been able to distinguish between the blessing and abuse of

it. Voltaire was offended, and Gibbon has turned his back; but the flock of Christ is still nourished, and still increases, notwithstanding the unbelief of a philosopher is able to convert bread into a stone, and a fish into a serpent.

I am much obliged to you for the voyages which I received, and began to read last night. My imagination is so captivated upon these occasions, that I seem to partake with the navigators in all the dangers they encountered. I lose my anchor: my mainsail is rent into shreds; I kill a shark, and by signs converse with a Patagonian; and all this without moving from the fire-side. The principal fruits of these circuits, that have been made around the globe, seem likely to be the amusement of those that staid at home. Discoveries have been made, but such discoveries as will hardly satisfy the expense of such undertakings. We brought away an Indian, and, having debauched him, we sent him home again to communicate the infection to his country—fine sport, to be sure, but such as will not defray the cost. Nations that live upon bread-fruit, and have no mines to make them worthy of our acquaintance, will be but little visited for the future. So much the better for them; their poverty is indeed their mercy. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XXX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Nov. 10, 1783.

My dear William,

I HAVE lost, and wasted, almost all my writing time, in making an alteration in the verses I either inclose, or subjoin, for I know not which will be the case at present. If prose comes readily, I shall transcribe them on another sheet, otherwise on this. You will understand, before you have read many of them, that they are not for the press. I lay you under no other injunctions. The unkind behaviour of our acquaintance, though it is possible that, in some instances, it may not much affect our happiness, nor engage many of our thoughts, will sometimes obtrude itself upon us with a degree of importunity not easily resisted; and then, perhaps, though almost insensible of it before, we feel more than the occasion will justify. In such a moment it was, that I conceived this poem, and gave loose to a degree of resentment, which perhaps I ought not to have indulged, but which in a cooler hour I cannot altogether condemn. My former intimacy with the two characters was such, that I could not but feel myself provoked by the neglect with which they both treated me on a late occasion. So much by way of preface.

You ought not to have supposed, that if you had visited us last summer, the pleasure of the interview would have been all your own. By such an imagination you wrong both yourself and us. Do you suppose we do not love you? You cannot suspect your mother of coldness; and as to me, assure yourself I have no friend in the world with whom I communicate without the least reserve, yourself excepted. Take heart then; and when you find a favourable opportunity to come, assure yourself of such a welcome from us both, as you have a right to look for. But I have observed in your two last letters, somewhat of a dejection and melancholy, that I am afraid you do not sufficiently strive against. I suspect you of being too sedentary. "You cannot walk." Why you cannot is best known to yourself. I am sure your legs are long enough, and your person does not overload them. But I beseech you ride, and ride often. I think I have heard you say you

cannot even do that without an object. Is not health an object? Is not a new prospect, which in most countries is gained at the end of every mile, an object. Assure yourself, that easy chairs are no friends to cheerfulness, and that a long winter, spent by the fire-side, is a prelude to an unhealthy spring. Every thing I see in the fields, is to me an object; and I can look at the same rivulet, or at a handsome tree, every day of my life, with new pleasure. This indeed is partly the effect of a natural taste for rural beauty, and partly the effect of habit, for I never, in all my life, have let slip the opportunity of breathing fresh air, and conversing with nature, when I could fairly catch it. I earnestly recommend a cultivation of the same taste to you, suspecting that you have neglected it, and suffer for doing so.

LETTER XXXI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Nov. 24, 1783.

My dear friend,

An evening unexpectedly retired, and which your mother and I spend without company (an occurrence far from frequent), affords me a favourable opportunity to write by to-morrow's post, which else I could not have found. You are very good to consider my literary necessities with so much attention, and I feel proportionably grateful. Blair's Lectures (though I suppose they must make a part of my private studies, not being *ad captum fœminarum*) will be perfectly welcome. You say you felt my verses. I assure you that in this you followed my example, for I felt them first. A man's lordship is nothing to me, any farther than in connexion with qualities that entitle him to my respect. If he thinks himself privileged by it to treat me with neglect, I am his humble servant, and shall never be at a loss to render him an equivalent. I will not, however, belie my knowledge of mankind so much, as to seem surprised at a treatment which I had abundant reason to expect. To these men, with whom I was once intimate, and for many years, I am no longer necessary, no longer convenient, or in any respect an object. They think of me as of the man in the moon; and whether I have a lantern, or a dog and faggot, or whether I have neither of those desirable accommodations, is to them a matter of perfect indifference: upon that point we are agreed; our indifference is mutual; and were I to publish again, which is not possible, I should give them a proof of it.

L'Estrange's Josephus has lately furnished us with evening lectures. But the historian is so tediously circumstantial, and the translator so insupportably coarse and vulgar, that we are all three weary of him. How would Tacitus have shone upon such a subject, great master as he was of the art of description; concise without obscurity, and affecting without being poetical. But so it was ordered, and for wise reasons no doubt, that the greatest calamities any people ever suffered, and an accomplishment of one of the most signal prophecies in the Scripture, should be recorded by one of the worst writers. The man was a temporizer too, and courted the favour of his Roman masters, at the expense of his own creed; or else an infidel, and absolutely disbelieved it. You will think me very difficult to please: I quarrel with Josephus for the want of elegance, and with some of our modern historians for having too much. With him, for running right forward like a gazette, without stopping to make a single observation by the way; and with them for pretending to delineate characters that existed two thousand years ago, and to disco-

ver the motives by which they were influenced, with the same precision as if they had been their contemporaries. Simplicity is become a very rare quality in a writer. In the decline of great kingdoms, and where refinement in all the arts is carried to an excess, I suppose it is always rare. The later Roman writers are remarkable for false ornament; they were yet no doubt admired by the readers of their own day; and with respect to authors of the present æra, the most popular among them appear to me equally censurable on the same account. Swift and Addison were simple.

Your mother wants room for a postscript, so my lecture must conclude abruptly. Yours.

LETTER XXXII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear friend,

It is hard upon us striplings, who have uncles still living (N. B. I myself have an uncle still alive), that those venerable gentlemen should stand in our way, even when the ladies are in question; that I, for instance, should find in one page of your letter, a hope that Miss Shuttleworth would be of your party, and be told in your next, that she is engaged to your uncle. Well, we may perhaps never be uncles; but we may reasonably hope that the time is coming, when others, as young as we are now, shall envy us the privileges of old age, and see us engross that share in the attention of the ladies, to which their youth must aspire in vain. Make our compliments, if you please, to your sister Eliza, and tell her that we are both mortified at having missed the pleasure of seeing her.

Balloons are so much the mode, that even in this country we have attempted a balloon. You may possibly remember that at a place called Weston, a little more than a mile from Olney, there lives a family whose name is Throckmorton. The present possessor is a young man, whom I remember a boy. He has a wife, who is young, genteel, and handsome. They are Papists, but much more amiable than many Protestants. We never had any intercourse with the family, though ever since we lived here we have enjoyed the range of their pleasure-grounds, having been favoured with a key, which admits us into all. When this man succeeded to the estate, on the death of his elder brother, and came to settle at Weston, I sent him a complimentary card, requesting the continuance of that privilege, having till then enjoyed it by favour of his mother, who on that occasion went to finish her days at Bath. You may conclude that he granted it, and for about two years nothing more passed between us. A fortnight ago, I received an invitation in the civilest terms, in which he told me, that the next day he should attempt to fill a balloon, and, if it would be any pleasure to me to be present, should be happy to see me. Your mother and I went. The whole country were there, but the balloon could not be filled. The endeavour was, I believe, very philosophically made; but such a process depends for its success upon such niceties as make it very precarious. Our reception was however flattering to a great degree: insomuch that more notice seemed to be taken of us, than we could possibly have expected, indeed rather more than any of his other guests. They even seemed anxious to recommend themselves to our regards. We drank chocolate, and were asked to dine, but were engaged. A day or two afterwards, Mrs. Unwin and I walked that way, and were overtaken in a shower. I

found a tree, that I thought would shelter us both, a large elm, in a grove that fronts the mansion. Mrs. T. observed us, and running towards us in the rain insisted on our walking in. He was gone out. We sat chatting with her till the weather cleared up, and then at her instance took a walk with her in the garden. The garden is almost their only walk, and is certainly the only retreat in which they are not liable to interruption. She offered us a key of it, in a manner that made it impossible not to accept it, and said she would send us one. A few days afterwards, in the cool of the evening, we walked that way again; we saw them going toward the house, and exchanged bows and curtsies at a distance, but did not join them. In a few minutes, when we had passed the house, and had almost reached the gate that opens out of the park into the adjoining field, I heard the iron gate belonging to the court-yard ring, and saw Mr. T. advancing hastily toward us: we made equal haste to meet him; he presented to us the key, which I told him I esteemed a singular favour; and after a few such speeches as are made on such occasions, we parted. This happened about a week ago. I concluded nothing less than that all this civility and attention was designed on their part as a prelude to a nearer acquaintance; but here at present the matter rests. I should like exceedingly to be on an easy footing there, to give a morning call now and then, and to receive one, but nothing more. For though he is one of the most agreeable men I ever saw, I could not wish to visit him in any other way; neither our house, furniture, servants, or income, being such as qualify us to make entertainments; neither would I on any account be introduced to the neighbouring gentry. Mr. T. is altogether a man of fashion, and respectable on every account.

I have told you a long story. Farewell. We number the days as they pass, and are glad that we shall see you and your sister soon. Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Jan. 3, 1784.

My dear William,

YOUR silence began to be distressing to both your mother and me; and had I not received a letter from you last night, I should have written by this post to inquire after your health. How can it be, that you, who are not stationary like me, but often change your situation, and mix with a variety of company, should suppose me furnished with such abundant materials, and yourself destitute. I assure you faithfully, that I do not find the soil of Olney prolific in the growth of such articles as make letter-writing a desirable employment. No place contributes less to the catalogue of incidents, or is more scantily supplied with anecdotes worth notice.

We have

One parson, one poet, one belman, one crier,
And the poor poet is our only 'squire.

Guess then if I have not more reason to expect two letters from you, than you one from me. The principal occurrence, and that which affects me most at present, came to pass this moment. The stair-foot door, being swelled by the thaw, would do any thing better than it would open. An attempt to force it upon that office has been attended with such a horrible dissolution of its parts, that we were immediately obliged to introduce a chirurgeon, commonly called a carpen-

ter, whose applications we have some hope will cure it of a lock'd jaw, and heal its numerous fractures. His medicines are powerful chalybeates, and a certain glutinous salve, which he tells me is made of the tails and ears of animals. The consequences, however, are rather unfavourable to my present employment, which does not well brook noise, bustle, and interruption.

This being the case, I shall not, perhaps, be either so perspicuous or so diffuse on the subject of which you desire my sentiments, as I should be; but I will do my best. Know then, that I have learnt long since, of Abbé Raynal, to hate all monopolies, as injurious, howsoever managed, to the interests of commerce at large; consequently the charter in question would not, at any rate, be a favourite of mine. This, however, is of itself, I confess, no sufficient reason to justify the resumption of it. But such reasons I think are not wanting. A grant of that kind, it is well known, is always forfeited by the non-performance of the conditions. And why not equally forfeited if those conditions are exceeded; if the design of it be perverted, and its operation extended to objects which were never in the contemplation of the donor? This appears to me to be no misrepresentation of their case, whose charter is supposed to be in danger. It constitutes them a trading company, and gives them an exclusive right to traffic in the East Indies. But it does no more. It invests them with no sovereignty; it does not convey to them the royal prerogative of making war and peace, which the king cannot alienate, if he would. But this prerogative they have exercised; and, forgetting the terms of their institution, have possessed themselves of an immense territory, which they have ruled with a rod of iron, to which it is impossible they should even have a right, unless such a one as it is a disgrace to plead—the right of conquest. The potentates of this country they dash in pieces like a potter's vessel, as often as they please, making the happiness of thirty millions of mankind a consideration subordinate to that of their own emolument, oppressing them as often as it may serve a lucrative purpose, and in no instance, that I have ever heard, consulting their interest or advantage. That government, therefore, is bound to interfere, and to un-king these tyrants, is to me self-evident. And if, having subjugated so much of this miserable world, it is therefore necessary that we must keep possession of it, it appears to me a duty so binding on the legislature to resume it from the hands of those usurpers, that I should think a curse, and a bitter one, must follow the neglect of it. But suppose this were done, can they be legally deprived of their charter? In truth I think so. If the abuse and perversion of a charter can amount to a defeasance of it, never were they so grossly palpable as in this instance; never was charter so justly forfeited. Neither am I at all afraid that such a measure should be drawn into a precedent; unless it could be alleged, as a sufficient reason for not having a rogue, that perhaps magistracy might grow wanton in the exercise of such a power, and now and then hang up an honest man for its amusement. When the governors of the Bank shall have deserved the same severity, I hope they will meet with it. In the mean time I do not think them a whit more in jeopardy because a corporation of plunderers have been brought to justice.

We are well, and love you all. I never wrote in such a hurry, nor in such a disturbance. Pardon the effects, and believe me yours affectionately.

LETTER XXXIV.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Feb. 10, 1784.

My dear friend,

THE morning is my writing time, and in the morning I have no spirits. So much the worse for my correspondents. Sleep, that refreshes my body, seems to cripple me in every other respect. As the evening approaches, I grow more alert; and, when I am retiring to bed, am more fit for mental occupation than at any other time. So it fares with us, whom they call nervous. By a strange inversion of the animal economy, we are ready to sleep when we have most need to be awake, and go to bed just when we might sit up to some purpose. The watch is irregularly wound up; it goes in the night, when it is not wanted, and in the day stands still. In many respects we have the advantage of our forefathers the Picts. We sleep in a whole skin, and are not obliged to submit to the painful operation of punctuating ourselves from head to foot in order that we may be decently dressed and fit to appear abroad. But, on the other hand, we have reason enough to envy them their tone of nerves, and that flow of spirits, which effectually secured them from all uncomfortable impressions of a gloomy atmosphere, and from every shade of melancholy from every other cause. They understood, I suppose, the use of vulnerary herbs, having frequent occasion for some skill in surgery; but physicians, I presume, they had none, having no need of any. Is it possible, that a creature like myself can be descended from such progenitors, in whom there appears not a single trace of family resemblance? What an alteration have a few ages made! They, without clothing, would defy the severest season; and I, with all the accommodations that art has since invented, am hardly secure even in the mildest. If the wind blows upon me when my pores are open, I catch cold. A cough is the consequence. I suppose, if such a disorder could have seized a Pict, his friends would have concluded that a bone had stuck in his throat, and that he was in some danger of choking. They would, perhaps, have addressed themselves to the cure of his cough by thrusting their fingers into his gullet, which would only have exasperated the case. But they would never have thought of administering laudanum, my only remedy. For this difference, however, that has obtained betweeen me and my ancestors, I am indebted to the luxurious practices and enfeebling self-indulgence of a long line of grandsires, who, from generation to generation, have been employed in deteriorating the breed; till at last the collected effects of all their follies have centred in my puny self: a man, indeed, but not in the image of those that went before me: a man who sigh and groan, who wear out life in dejection and oppression of spirits, and who never think of the aborigines of the country to which I belong, without wishing that I had been born among them. The evil is without a remedy, unless the ages that are passed could be recalled, my whole pedigree be permitted to live again, and, being properly admonished to beware of enervating sloth and refinement, would preserve their hardiness of nature unimpaired, and transmit the desirable quality to their posterity. I once saw Adam in a dream. We sometimes say of a picture, that we doubt not its likeness to the original, though we never saw him; a judgment we have some reason to form, when the face is strongly charactered, and the features full of expression. So I think of my visionary Adam, and for a

similar reason. His figure was awkward, indeed, in the extreme. It was evident, that he had never been taught by a Frenchman to hold his head erect, or to turn out his toes; to dispose gracefully of his arms, or to simper without a meaning. But if Mr. Bacon was called upon to produce a statue of Hercules, he need not wish for a juster pattern. He stood like a rock; the size of his limbs, the prominence of his muscles, and the height of his stature, all conspired to bespeak him a creature, whose strength had suffered no diminution, and who, being the first of his race, did not come into the world under a necessity of sustaining a load of infirmities, derived to him from the intemperance of others. He was as much stouter than a Pict, as I suppose a Pict to have been than I. Upon my hypothesis, therefore, there has been a gradual declension, in point of bodily vigour, from Adam down to me; at least if my dream were a just representation of that gentleman, and deserve the credit I cannot help giving it, such must have been the case. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XXXV.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Olney, March 11, 1784.

I RETURN you many thanks for your Apology, which I have read with great pleasure. You know of old that your style always pleases me; and having, in a former letter, given you the reasons for which I like it, I spare you now the pain of a repetition. The spirit, too, in which you write, pleases me as much. But I perceive that, in some cases, it is possible to be severe, and, at the same time, perfectly good-tempered; in all cases, I suppose, where we suffer by an injurious and unreasonable attack, and can justify our conduct by a plain and simple narrative. On such occasions, truth itself seems a satire, because by implication, at least, it convicts our adversaries of the want of charity and candour. For this reason, perhaps, you will find, that you have made many angry, though you are not so; and it is possible, they may be the more angry upon that very account. To assert, and to prove, that an enlightened minister of the Gospel may, without any violation of his conscience, and even upon the ground of prudence and propriety, continue in the Establishment; and to do this with the most absolute composure, must be very provoking to the dignity of some dissenting doctors; and, to nettle them still the more, you in a manner impose upon them the necessity of being silent, by declaring, that you will be so yourself. Upon the whole, however, I have no doubt that your Apology will do good. If it should irritate some, who have more zeal than knowledge, and more of bigotry than of either, it may serve to enlarge the views of others, and to convince them that there may be grace, truth, and efficacy, in the ministry of a church, of which they are not members. I wish it success, and all that attention to which, both from the nature of the subject and the manner in which you have treated it, it is so well entitled.

The patronage of the East Indies will be a dangerous weapon, in whatever hands. I have no prospect of a deliverance for this country, but the same that I have of a possibility that we may one day be disencumbered of our ruinous possessions in the East.

Our good neighbours, who have so successfully knocked away our Western crutch from under us, seem to design us the same favour on the opposite side, in which case we shall be poor, but I think we shall stand a

better chance to be free; and I had rather drink water-gruel for breakfast, and be no man's slave, than wear a chain, and drink tea as usual.

I have just room to add, that we love you as usual, and are your affectionate William and Mary.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the Rev. John Newton.

March 19, 1784.

My dear friend,

I WISH it were in my power to give you any account of the marquis Caraccioli. Some years since I saw a short history of him in the Review, of which I recollect no particulars, except that he was (and, for aught I know, may be still) an officer in the Prussian service. I have two volumes of his works lent me by lady Austen. One is upon the subject of self-acquaintance, and the other treats of the art of conversing with the same gentleman. Had I pursued my purpose of translating him, my design was to have furnished myself, if possible, with some authentic account of him, which I suppose may be procured at any bookseller's who deals in foreign publications. But, for the reasons given in my last, I have laid aside the design. There is something in his style that touches me exceedingly, and which I do not know how to describe. I should call it pathetic, if it were occasional only, and never occurred but when his subject happened to be particularly affecting. But it is universal; he has not a sentence that is not marked with it. Perhaps, therefore, I may describe it better by saying, that his whole work has an air of pious and tender melancholy, which, to me, at least, is extremely agreeable. This property of it, which depends, perhaps, altogether upon the arrangement of his words and the modulation of his sentences, it would be very difficult to preserve in a translation. I do not know that our language is capable of being so managed, and rather suspect that it is not, and that it is peculiar to the French, because it is not unfrequent among their writers, and I never saw any thing similar to it in our own.

My evenings are devoted to books. I read aloud for the entertainment of the party, thus making amends, by a vociferation of two hours, for my silence at other times. We are in good health, and waiting as patiently as we can for the end of this second winter. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

April 25, 1784.

My dear William,

I WISH I had both burning words and bright thoughts. But I have at present neither. My head is not itself. Having had an unpleasant night, and a melancholy day, and having already written a long letter, I do not find myself, in point of spirits, at all qualified either to burn or shine. The post sets out early on Tuesday. The morning is the only time of exercise with me. In order, therefore, to keep it open for that purpose, and to comply with your desire of an immediate answer, I give you as much as I can spare of the present evening.

Since I despatched my last, Blair has crept a little farther into my favour. As his subjects improve, he improves with them; but upon the whole I account him a dry writer, useful no doubt as an instructor, but as little entertaining as, with so much knowledge, it is possible to be. His language is (except Swift's) the least figurative I remember to have seen,

and the few figures found in it are not always happily employed. I take him to be a critic very little animated by what he reads, who rather reasons about the beauties of an author than really tastes them, and who finds that a passage is praise-worthy, not because it charms him, but because it is accommodated to the laws of criticism, in that case made and provided. I have a little complied with your desire of marginal annotations, and should have dealt in them more largely, had I read the books to myself; but, being reader to the ladies, I have not always time to settle my own opinion of a doubtful expression, much less to suggest an emendation. I have not censured a particular observation in the book, though, when I met with it, it displeased me. I this moment recollect it, and may as well therefore note it here. He is commending, and deservedly, that most noble description of a thunder storm in the first Georgic, which ends with

*Ingeminant austri et densissimus imber.**

Being in haste, I do not refer to the volume for his very words, but my memory will serve me with the matter. When poets describe, he says, they should always select such circumstances of the subject as are least obvious, and therefore most striking. He therefore admires the effects of the thunderbolt splitting mountains, and filling a nation with astonishment; but quarrels with the closing member of the period, as containing particulars of a storm not worthy of Virgil's notice, because obvious to the notice of all. But here I differ from him; not being able to conceive that wind and rain can be improper in the description of a tempest, or how wind and rain could possibly be more poetically described. Virgil is indeed remarkable for finishing his periods well, and never comes to a stop but with the most consummate dignity of numbers and expression; and in the instance in question, I think, his skill in this respect is remarkably displayed. The line is perfectly majestic in its march. As to the wind, it is such only as the word *ingeminant* could describe; and the words *densissimus imber* give one an idea of a shower indeed, but of such a shower as is not very common, and such a one as only Virgil could have done justice to by a single epithet. Far therefore from agreeing with the Doctor in his stricture, I do not think the Æneid contains a nobler line, or a description more magnificently finished.

We are glad that Dr. C—— has singled you out upon this occasion. Your performance we doubt not will justify his choice: fear not—you have a heart that can feel upon charitable occasions, and therefore will not fail you upon this. The burning words will come fast enough when the sensibility is such as yours.—Yours, my dear friend.

* The South winds redouble and the thickest shower.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

May 8, 1784.

My dear friend,

You do well to make your letters merry ones, though not very merry yourself, and that both for my sake and your own; for your own sake, because it sometimes happens, that, by assuming an air of cheerfulness, we become cheerful in reality; and for mine, because I have always more need of a laugh than a cry; being somewhat disposed to melancholy by natural temperament as well as by other causes.

It was long since, and even in the infancy of John Gilpin, recommend-

ed to me by a lady now at Bristol, to write a sequel. But having always observed, that authors, elated with the success of a first part, have fallen below themselves when they have attempted a second, I had more prudence than to take her counsel. I want you to read the history of that hero, published by Bladon, and to tell me what it is made of. But buy it not. For, puffed as it is in the papers, it can be but a bookseller's job, and must be dear at the price of two shillings. In the last packet but one that I received from Johnson, he asked me if I had any improvements of John Gilpin in hand, or if I designed any; for that to print only the original again, would be to publish what has been hackneyed in every magazine, in every newspaper, and in every street. I answered, that the copy which I sent him contained two or three small variations from the first, except which I had none to propose; and if he thought him now too trite to make a part of my volume, I should willingly acquiesce in his judgment. I take it for granted, therefore, that he will not bring up the rear of my poems according to my first intention, and shall not be sorry for the omission. It may spring from a principle of pride; but spring from what it may, I feel, and have long felt, a disinclination to a public avowal that he is mine: and since he became so popular, I have felt it more than ever; not that I should have expressed a scruple, if Johnson had not. But a fear has suggested itself to me, that I might expose myself to a charge of vanity by admitting him into my book, and that some people would impute it to me as a crime. Consider what the world is made of, and you will not find my suspicions chimerical. Add to this, that when, on correcting the latter part of the fifth book of the Task, I came to consider the solemnity and sacred nature of the subjects there handled, it seemed to me an incongruity at the least, not to call it by a harsher name, to follow up such premises with such a conclusion. I am well content therefore with having laughed and made others laugh, and will build my hopes of success, as a poet, upon more important matter.

In our printing business we now jog on merrily enough. The coming week will, I hope, bring me to an end of the Task, and the next fortnight to an end of the whole. I am glad to have Paley on my side in the affair of education. He is certainly on all subjects a sensible man, and on such, a wise one. But I am mistaken if Tirocinium do not make some of my friends angry, and procure me enemies not a few. There is a sting in verse, that prose neither has nor can have; and I do not know that schools in the gross, and especially public schools, have ever been so pointedly condemned before. But they are become a nuisance, a pest, an abomination; and it is fit that the eyes and noses of mankind should, if possible, be opened to perceive it.

This is indeed an author's letter; but it is an author's letter to his friend. If you will be the friend of an author, you must expect such letters. Come July, and come yourself, with as many of your exterior selves as can possibly come with you!

Yours, my dear William, affectionately, and with your mother's remembrances. Adieu.

LETTER XXXIX.

To the Rev. John Newton.

July 5, 1784.

My dear friend,

A DEARTH of materials, a consciousness that my subjects are, for the most part, and must be uninteresting and unimportant; but, above all, a poverty of animal spirits, that

makes writing much a great fatigue to me, have occasioned my choice of smaller paper. Acquiesce in the justness of these reasons for the present; and if ever the times should mend with me, I sincerely promise to amend with them.

Homer says on a certain occasion, that Jupiter, when he was wanted at home, was gone to partake of an entertainment provided for him by the Ethiopians. If by Jupiter we understand the weather, or the season, as the ancients frequently did, we may say that our English Jupiter has been absent on account of some such invitation: during the whole month of June he left us to experience almost the rigours of winter. This fine day, however, affords us some hope that the feast is ended, and that we shall enjoy his company without the interference of his Ethiopian friends again.

Is it possible, that the wise men of antiquity could entertain a real reverence for the fabulous rubbish which they dignified with the name of religion? We, who have been favoured from our infancy with so clear a light, are perhaps hardly competent to decide the question, and may strive in vain to imagine the absurdities, that even a good understanding may receive as truths, when totally unaided by revelation. It seems, however, that men whose conceptions upon other subjects were often sublime, whose reasoning powers were undoubtedly equal to our own, and whose management in matters of jurisprudence, that required a very industrious examination of evidence, was as acute and subtle as that of a modern attorney-general, could not be the dupes of such imposture, as a child among us would detect and laugh at. Juvenal, I remember, introduces one of his satires with an observation, that there were some in his day who had the hardiness to laugh at the stories of Tartarus and Styx and Charon, and of the frogs that croak upon the banks of Lethe, giving his reader, at the same time, cause to suspect, that he was himself one of that profane number. Horace, on the other hand, declares in sober sadness, that he would not for all the world get into a boat with a man who had divulged the Eleusinian mysteries. Yet we know, that those mysteries, whatever they might be, were altogether as unworthy to be esteemed divine, as the mythology of the vulgar. How then must we determine? If Horace were a good and orthodox heathen, how came Juvenal to be such an ungracious libertine in principle, as to ridicule the doctrines which the other held as sacred? Their opportunities of information and their mental advantages were equal. I feel myself rather inclined to believe, that Juvenal's avowed infidelity was sincere, and that Horace was no better than a canting hypocritical professor.

You must grant me a dispensation for saying any thing, whether it be sense or nonsense, upon the subject of politics. It is truly a matter in which I am so little interested, that were it not that it sometimes serves me for a theme, when I can find no other, I should never mention it. I would forfeit a large sum, if after advertising a month in the Gazette, the minister of the day, whoever he may be, could discover a man that cares about him, or his measures, so little as I do. When I say that I would forfeit a large sum, I mean to have it understood, that I would forfeit such a sum if I had it. If Mr. Pitt be indeed a virtuous man, as such I respect him. But at the best, I fear that he will have to say at last with Hector,

Si Pergama dextrâ
*Defendi possent, etiàm nâc defensa fuissent.**

Be he what he may, I do not like his

* If Troy could be defended, my right hand had defended it.

taxes. At least I am much disposed to quarrel with some of them. The additional duty upon candles, by which the poor will be much affected, hurts me most. He says, indeed, that they will but little feel it, because even now they can hardly afford the use of them. He had certainly put no compassion into his budget, when he produced from it this tax and such an argument to support it. Justly translated, it seems to amount to this—"Make the necessaries of life too expensive for the poor to reach them, and you will save their money. If they buy but few candles, they will pay but little tax; and if they buy none, the tax, as to them, will be annihilated." True. But, in the mean time, they will break their shins against their furniture, if they have any, and will be but little the richer, when the hours, in which they might work, if they could see, shall be deducted.

I have bought a great dictionary, and want nothing but Latin authors, to furnish me with the use of it. Had I purchased them first, I had begun at the right end. But I could not afford it. I beseech you admire my prudence. Yours affectionately.

LETTER XL.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Aug. 14, 1784.

My dear friend,

I GIVE you joy of a journey performed without trouble or danger. You have travelled five hundred miles without having encountered either. Some neighbours of ours, about a fortnight since, made an excursion only to a neighbouring village, and brought home with them fractured sculls and broken limbs, and one of them is dead. For my own part, I seem pretty much exempted from the dangers of the road. Thanks to that tender interest and concern, which the legislature takes in my security! Having no doubt their fears lest so precious a life should determine too soon, and by some untimely stroke of misadventure, they have made wheels and horses so expensive, that I am not likely to owe my death to either.

Your mother and I continue to visit Weston daily, and find in those agreeable bowers such amusement, as leaves us but little room to regret that we can go no farther. Having touched that theme, I cannot abstain from the pleasure of telling you, that our neighbours in that place, being about to leave it for some time, and meeting us there but a few evenings before their departure, entreated us, during their absence, to consider the garden, and all its contents, as our own, and to gather whatever we liked, without the least scruple. We accordingly picked strawberries as often as we went, and brought home as many bundles of honeysuckles as served to perfume our dwelling till they returned.

Once more, by the aid of lord Dartmouth, I find myself a voyager in the Pacific Ocean. In our last night's lecture we made our acquaintance with the island of Hapaee, where we had never been before. The French and Italians, it seems, have but little cause to plume themselves on account of their achievements in the dancing way; and we may hereafter, without much repining at it, acknowledge their superiority in that art. They are equalled, perhaps excelled, by savages. How wonderful that without any intercourse with a politer world, and having made no proficiency in any other accomplishment, they should in this, however, have made

themselves such adepts, that for regularity and grace of motion they might even be our masters! How wonderful too, that with a tub, and a stick, they should be able to produce such harmony, as persons accustomed to the sweetest music, cannot but hear with pleasure! Is it not very difficult to account for the striking difference of character that obtains among the inhabitants of these islands? Many of them are near neighbours to each other; their opportunities of improvement much the same; yet some of them are in a degree polite; discover symptoms of taste, and have a sense of elegance: while others are as rude as we naturally expect to find a people, who have never had any communication with the northern hemisphere. These volumes furnish much matter of philosophical speculation, and often entertain me, even while I am not employed in reading them.

I am sorry you have not been able to ascertain the doubtful intelligence I have received on the subject of cork skirts and bosoms. I am now every day occupied in giving all the grace I can to my new production, and in transcribing it; I shall soon arrive at the passage that censures that folly, which I shall be loth to expunge, but which I must not spare, unless the criminals can be convicted. The world, however, is not so unproductive of subjects of censure, but that it may probably supply me with some other that may serve as well.

If you know any body that is writing or intends to write an epic poem on the new regulation of *franks*, you may give him my compliments, and these two lines for a beginning—

Heu quot amatores nunc torquet epistola rara!
Vectigal certum, perituraque gratia FRANKI!

Yours faithfully.

LETTER XLI.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Aug. 16, 1784.

My dear friend,

HAD you not expressed a desire to hear from me before you take leave of Lymington, I certainly should not have answered you so soon. Knowing the place, and the amusements it affords, I should have had more modesty than to suppose myself capable of adding any thing to your present entertainments worthy to rank with them. I am not, however, totally destitute of such pleasures as an inland country may pretend to. If my windows do not command a view of the ocean, at least they look out upon a profusion of mignonette; which, if it be not so grand an object, is, however, quite as fragrant: and if I have not a hermit in a grotto, I have nevertheless myself in a green-house, a less venerable figure perhaps, but not at all less animated than he: nor are we in this nook altogether unfurnished with such means of philosophical experiment and speculation, as at present the world rings with. On Thursday morning last, we sent up a balloon from Emberton meadow. Thrice it rose, and as oft descended; and in the evening it performed another flight at Newport, where it went up, and came down no more. Like the arrow discharged at the pigeon in the Trojan games, it kindled in the air, and was consumed in a moment. I have not heard what interpretation the soothsayers have given to the omen, but shall wonder a little if the Newton shepherd prognosticate any thing less from it than the most bloody war that was ever waged in Europe.

I am reading Cook's last voyage, and am much pleased and amused with it. It seems, that in some of

the Friendly Isles they excel so much in dancing, and perform that operation with such exquisite delicacy and grace, that they are not surpassed even upon our European stages. Oh! that Vestris had been in the ship, that he might have seen himself outdone by a savage. The paper indeed tells us, that the queen of France has clapped this king of capers up in prison, for declining to dance before her, on a pretence of sickness, when in fact he was in perfect health. If this be true, perhaps he may by this time be prepared to second such a wish as mine, and to think, that the durance he suffers would be well exchanged for a dance at Annamooka. I should, however, as little have expected to hear, that these islanders had such consummate skill in an art that requires so much taste in the conduct of the person, as that they were good mathematicians and astronomers. Defective, as they are, in every branch of knowledge, and in every other species of refinement, it seems wonderful that they should arrive at such perfection in the dance, which some of our English gentlemen, with all the assistance of French instruction, find it impossible to learn. We must conclude, therefore, that particular nations have a genius for particular feats, and that our neighbours in France, and our friends in the South Sea, have minds very nearly akin, though they inhabit countries so very remote from each other.

Mrs. Unwin remembers to have been in company with Mr. Gilpin at her brother's. She thought him very sensible and polite, and consequently very agreeable.

We are truly glad that Mrs. Newton and yourself are so well, and that there is reason to hope that Eliza is better. You will learn from this letter that we are so; and that, for my own part, I am not quite so low in spirits as at some times. Learn too, what you knew before, that we love you all, and that I am your affectionate friend.

LETTER XLII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Oct. 2, 1784.

My dear William,

A POET can but ill spare time for prose. The truth is, I am in haste to finish my transcript, that you may receive it time enough to give it a leisurely reading before you go to town; which, whether I shall be able to accomplish, is at present uncertain. I have the whole punctuation to settle, which in blank verse is of the last importance, and of a species peculiar to that composition: for I know no use of points, unless to direct the voice; the management of which, in the reading of blank verse, being more difficult than in the reading of any other poetry, requires perpetual hints and notices, to regulate the inflections, cadences, and pauses. This, however, is an affair that, in spite of grammarians, must be left pretty much *ad libitum scriptoris.** For I suppose every author points according to his own reading. If I can send the parcel to the waggon by one o'clock next Wednesday, you will have it on Saturday the ninth. But this is more than I expect. Perhaps I shall not be able to despatch it till the eleventh, in which case it will not reach you till the thirteenth. I the rather think that the latter of these two periods will obtain, because, besides the punctuation, I have the argument of each book to transcribe. Add to this, that in writing for the printer, I am forced to write my best, which makes slow work. The motto of the whole is—*Fit surculos arbor.*† If you can put the

* To the will of the author.

† The twig becomes a tree.

author's name under it, do so—if not, it must go without one, for I know not to whom to ascribe it. It was a motto taken by a certain prince of Orange, in the year 1733; but not to a poem of his own writing, nor indeed to any poem at all, but, as I think, to a medal.

Mr. ——— is a Cornish member; but for what place in Cornwall I know not. All I know of him is, that I saw him once clap his two hands upon a rail, meaning to leap over it. But he did not think the attempt a safe one, and therefore took them off again. He was in company with Mr. Throckmorton. With that gentleman we drank chocolate, since I wrote last. The occasion of our visit was, as usual, a balloon. Your mother invited her, and I him, and they promised to return the visit, but have not yet performed. *Tout le monde se trouvoit là*,* as you may suppose; among the rest, Mrs. W——. She was driven to the door by her son, a boy of seventeen, in a phaeton, drawn by four horses from Lilliput. This is an ambiguous expression; and, should what I write now be legible a thousand years hence, might puzzle commentators. Be it known therefore, to the Alduses and the Stevenses of ages yet to come, that I do not mean to affirm, that Mrs. W—— herself came from Lilliput that morning, or indeed that she ever was there, but merely to describe the horses, as being so diminutive, that they might be, with propriety, said to be Lilliputian.

The privilege of franking having been so cropped, I know not in what manner I and my bookseller are to settle the conveyance of proof sheets hither and back again. They must travel, I imagine, by coach, a large quantity of them at a time; for, like other authors, I find myself under a poetical necessity of being frugal.

We love you all, jointly and separately, as usual.

* Every body was there.

LETTER XLIII.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

November, 1784.

My dear friend,

To condole with you on the death of a mother, aged eighty-seven, would be absurd—rather, therefore, as is reasonable, I congratulate you on the almost singular felicity of having enjoyed the company of so amiable and so near a relation so long. Your lot and mine, in this respect, have been very different, as indeed in almost every other. Your mother lived to see you rise, at least to see you comfortably established in the world. Mine dying, when I was six years old, did not live to see me sink in it. You may remember with pleasure while you live, a blessing vouchsafed to you so long; and I, while I live, must regret a comfort of which I was deprived so early. I can truly say, that not a week passes (perhaps I might with equal veracity say a day,) in which I do not think of her. Such was the impression her tenderness made upon me, though the opportunity she had for showing it was so short. But the ways of God are equal—and when I reflect on the pangs she would have suffered had she been a witness of all mine, I see more cause to rejoice than to mourn, that she was hidden in the grave so soon.

We have, as you say, lost a lively and sensible neighbour in lady Austen; but we have been long accustomed to a state of retirement, within one degree of solitude; and, being naturally lovers of still life, can relapse into our former duality, with-

out being unhappy at the change. To me, indeed, a third is not necesry, while I can have the companion I have had these twenty years.

I am gone to the press again; a volume of mine will greet your hands some time either in the course of the winter, or early in the spring. You will find it, perhaps, on the whole, more entertaining than the former, as it treats a greater variety of subjects, and those at least the most of a sublunary kind. It will consist of a poem in six books, called the Task. To which will be added another, which I finished yesterday, called, I believe, Tirocinium, on the subject of education.

You perceive that I have taken your advice, and given the pen no rest.

LETTER XLIV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

March 20, 1785.

My dear William,

I THANK you for your letter. It made me laugh; and there are not many things capable of being contained within the dimensions of a letter, for which I see cause to be more thankful. I was pleased, too, to see my opinion of his lordship's *nonchalance*, upon a subject that you had so much at heart, completely verified. I do not know that the eye of a nobleman was ever dissected. I cannot help supposing, however, that, were that organ, as it exists in the head of such a personage, to be accurately examined, it would be found to differ materially in its construction from the eye of a commoner; so very different is the view that men in an elevated, and in an humble station, have of the same object. What appears great, sublime, beautiful, and important to you and to me, when submitted to my lord, or his grace, and submitted, too, with the utmost humility, is either too minute to be visible at all, or, if seen, seems trivial, and of no account. My supposition, therefore, seems not altogether chimerical.

In two months I have corrected proof sheets to the amount of ninety-three pages and no more. In other words, I have received three packets. Nothing is quick enough for impatience; and I suppose that the impatience of an author has the quickest of all possible movements. It appears to me, however, that at this rate we shall not publish till next autumn. Should you happen therefore to pass Johnson's door, pop in your head as you go, and just insinuate to him, that, were his remittances rather more frequent, that frequency would be no inconvenience to me. I much expected one this evening, a fortnight having now elapsed since the arrival of the last. But none came, and I felt myself a little mortified. I took up the newspaper, however, and read it. There I found, that the Emperor and the Dutch are, after all their negotiations, going to war. Such reflections as these struck me. A great part of Europe is going to be involved in the greatest of all calamities—troops are in motion—artillery is drawn together—cabinets are busied in contriving schemes of blood and devastation—thousands will perish, who are incapable of understanding the dispute; and thousands, who, whatever the event may be, are little more interested in it than myself, will suffer unspeakable hardships in the course of the quarrel. Well, Mr. Poet, and how then? You have composed certain verses, which you are desirous to see in print; and because the impression seems to be delayed, you are displeased, not to say dispirited. Be ashamed of yourself! You live in a world in which your feelings may find worthier subjects.

Be concerned for the havoc of nations, and mourn over your retarded volume when you find a dearth of more important tragedies!

You postpone certain topics of conference to our next meeting. When shall it take place? I do not wish for you just now, because the garden is a wilderness, and so is all the country around us. In May we shall have 'sparagus, and weather in which we may stroll to Weston; at least we may hope for it; therefore come in May; you will find us happy to receive you, and as much of your fair household as you can bring with you.

We are very sorry for your uncle's indisposition. The approach of summer seems however to be in his favour, that season being of all remedies for the rheumatism, I believe, the most effectual.

I thank you for your intelligence concerning the celebrity of John Gilpin. You may be sure that it was agreeable—but your own feelings on occasion of that article, pleased me most of all. Well, my friend, be comforted. You had not an opportunity of saying publicly, "I know the author." But the author himself will say as much for you soon, and perhaps will feel in doing so a gratification equal to your own.

In the affair of face-painting, I am precisely of your opinion. Adieu.

LETTER XLV.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

June 25, 1785.

My dear friend,

I WRITE in a nook, that I call my *boudoir*. It is a summer-house, not much bigger than a sedan-chair, the door of which opens into the garden, that is now crowded with pinks, roses, and honeysuckles; and the window into my neighbour's orchard. It formerly served an apothecary, now dead, as a smoking-room; and under my feet is a trap-door, which once covered a hole in the ground, where he kept his bottles. At present, however, it is dedicated to sublimer uses. Having lined it with garden mats, and furnished it with a table and two chairs, here I write all that I write in summer-time, whether to my friends or to the public. It is secure from all noise, and a refuge from all intrusion; for intruders sometimes trouble me in the winter evenings at Olney. But (thanks to my *boudoir!*) I can now hide myself from them. A poet's retreat is sacred. They acknowledge the truth of that proposition, and never presume to violate it.

The last sentence puts me in mind to tell you, that I have ordered my volume to your door. My bookseller is the most dilatory of all his fraternity, or you would have received it long since. It is more than a month since I returned him the last proof, and consequently since the printing was finished. I sent him the manuscript at the beginning of last November, that he might publish while the town was full; and he will hit the exact moment when it is entirely empty. Patience (you will perceive) is in no situation exempted from the severest trials; a remark that may serve to comfort you under the numberless trials of your own

LETTER XLVI.

To Lady Hesketh.

Oct. 12, 1785.

My dear cousin,

IT is no new thing with you to give pleasure. But I will venture to say, that you do not often give more than you gave me this morning.—When I came down to breakfast, and found upon the table a letter franked by my uncle, and when open-

ing that frank I found that it contained a letter from you, I said within myself—"This is just as it should be. We are all grown young again, and the days that I thought I should see no more are actually returned." You perceive, therefore, that you judged well when you conjectured, that a line from you would not be disagreeable to me. It could not be otherwise than as in fact it proved, a most agreeable surprise; for I can truly boast of an affection for you, that neither years nor interrupted intercourse have at all abated. I need only recollect how much I valued you once, and with how much cause, immediately to feel a revival of the same value; if that can be said to revive, which at the most has only been dormant for want of employment. But I slander it when I say that it has slept. A thousand times have I recollected a thousand scenes, in which our two selves have formed the whole of the drama, with the greatest pleasure; at times, too, when I had no reason to suppose that I should ever hear from you again. I have laughed with you at the Arabian Nights Entertainment, which afforded us, as you well know, a fund of merriment that deserves never to be forgot. I have walked with you to Netley Abbey, and have scrambled with you over hedges in every direction, and many other feats we have performed together, upon the field of my remembrance, and all within these few years. Should I say within these twelve months, I should not transgress the truth. The hours that I have spent with you were among the pleasantest of my former days, and are therefore chronicled in my mind, so deeply as to fear no erasure. Neither do I forget my poor friend, sir Thomas. I should remember him indeed, at any rate, on account of his personal kindness to myself; but the last testimony that he gave of his regard for you, endears him to me still more. With his uncommon understanding (for with many peculiarities he had more sense than any of his acquaintance) and with his generous sensibilities, it was hardly possible that he should not distinguish you as he has done. As it was the last, so it was the best proof, that he could give, of a judgment that never deceived him, when he would allow himself leisure to consult it.

You say that you have often heard of me:—that puzzles me. I cannot imagine from what quarter; but it is no matter. I must tell you, however, my cousin, that your information has been a little defective. That I am happy in my situation, is true; I live, and have lived these twenty years, with Mrs. Unwin, to whose affectionate care of me, during the far greater part of that time, it is (under Providence) owing, that I live at all. But I do not account myself happy in having been for thirteen of those years in a state of mind, that has made all that care and attention necessary; an attention and a care that have injured her health, and which, had she not been uncommonly supported, must have brought her to the grave. But I will pass to another subject: it would be cruel to particularize only to give pain; neither would I by any means give a sable hue to the first letter of a correspondence so unexpectedly renewed.

I am delighted with what you tell me of my uncle's good health. To enjoy any measure of cheerfulness at so late a day, is much. But to have that late day enlivened with the vivacity of youth, is much more, and in these postdiluvian times, a rarity indeed. Happy, for the most part, are parents who have daughters.—Daughters are not apt to outlive their natural affections, which a son has generally survived, even before his boyish years are expired. I rejoice particularly in my uncle's felicity, who has three female descendants

from his little person, who leave him nothing to wish for upon that head.

My dear cousin, dejection of spirits, which (I suppose) may have prevented many a man from becoming an author, made me one. I find constant employment necessary, and therefore take care to be constantly employed. Manual occupations do not engage the mind sufficiently; as I know by experience, having tried many. But composition, especially of verse, absorbs it wholly. I write, therefore, generally three hours in a morning, and in an evening I transcribe. I read also, but less than I write; for I must have bodily exercise, and therefore never pass a day without it.

You ask me where I have been this summer. I answer, at Olney. Should you ask me where I spent the last seventeen summers, I should still answer, at Olney. Ay, and the winters also, I have seldom left it; and, except when I attended my brother in his last illness, never, I believe, a fortnight together.

Adieu, my beloved cousin. I shall not always be thus nimble in reply, but shall always have great pleasure in answering you when I can. Yours, my dear friend and cousin.

LETTER XLVII.

To Lady Hesketh.

My dearest cousin,

I AM glad that I always loved you as I did. It releases me from any occasion to suspect that my present affection for you is indebted for its existence to any selfish considerations. No. I am sure I love you disinterestedly, and for your own sake; because I never thought of you with any other sensations than those of the truest affection, even while I was under the persuasion that I should never hear from you again. But with my present feelings, superadded to those that I always had for you, I find it no easy matter to do justice to my sensations. I perceive myself in a state of mind similar to that of the traveller described in Pope's Messiah, who, as he passes through a sandy desert, starts at the sudden and unexpected sound of a waterfall. You have placed me in a situation new to me, and in which I feel myself somewhat puzzled how to behave. At the same time I would not grieve you, by putting a check upon your bounty. I would be as careful not to abuse it, as if I were a miser, and the question not about your money, but my own.

Although I do not suspect that a secret to you, my cousin, is any burthen, yet, having maturely considered that point since I wrote my last, I feel myself altogether disposed to release you from the injunction, to that effect, under which I laid you. I have now made such a progress in my translation, that I need neither fear that I shall stop short of the end, nor that any other rider of Pegasus should overtake me. Therefore, if at any time it should fall fairly in your way, or you should feel yourself invited to say I am so occupied, you have my poetship's free permission. Dr. Johnson read and recommended my first volume.

LETTER XLVIII.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, Jan. 31, 1786.

IT is very pleasant, my dearest cousin, to receive a present so delicately conveyed as that which I received so lately from Anonymous; but it is also very painful to have nobody to thank for it. I find myself therefore driven by stress of necessity to the following resolutions, *viz.* that I will constitute you my thanks-receiver

general, for whatsoever gift I shall receive hereafter, as well as for those that I have already received from a nameless benefactor. I therefore thank you, my cousin, for a most elegant present, including the most elegant compliment that ever poet was honoured with; for a snuff-box of tortoise-shell, with a beautiful landscape on the lid of it, glazed with crystal, having the figures of three hares in the fore-ground, and inscribed above with these words, *The peasant's nest;* and below with these, *Tiny, Puss, and Bess.* For all and every of these I thank you, and also for standing proxy on this occasion. Nor must I forget to thank you, that so soon after I had sent you the first letter of Anonymous, I received another in the same hand. There! Now I am a little easier.

I have almost conceived a design to send up half a dozen stout country fellows, to tie by the leg to their respective bed-posts the company that so abridges your opportunity of writing to me. Your letters are the joy of my heart; and I cannot endure to be robbed, by I know not whom, of half my treasure. But there is no comfort without a drawback; and therefore it is, that I, who have unknown friends, have unknown enemies also. Ever since I wrote last, I find myself in better health, and my nocturnal spasms and fever considerably abated. I intend to write to Dr. Kerr on Thursday, that I may gratify him with an account of my amendment: for to him I know that it will be a gratification. Were he not a physician, I should regret that he lives so distant, for he is a most agreeable man; but being what he is, it would be impossible to have his company, even if he were a neighbour, unless in time of sickness; at which time, whatever charms he might have himself, my own must necessarily lose much of their effect on him.

When I write to you, my dear, what I have already related to the General, I am always fearful lest I should tell you that for news with which you are well acquainted. For once, however, I will venture—On Wednesday last, I received from Johnson the MS copy of a specimen that I had sent to the General, and, inclosed in the same cover, notes upon it by an unknown critic. Johnson, in a short letter recommended him to me as a man of unquestionable learning and ability. On perusal and consideration of his remarks, I found him such; and having nothing so much at heart as to give all possible security to yourself and the General that my work shall not come forth unfinished, I answered Johnson that I would gladly submit my MS to his friend. He is, in truth, a very clever fellow, perfectly a stranger to me, and one who, I promise you, will not spare for severity of animadversion where he shall find occasion. It is impossible for you, my dearest cousin, to express a wish that I do not equally feel a wish to gratify.—You are desirous that Maty should see a book of my Homer; and for that reason, if Maty will see a book of it, he shall be welcome, although time is likely to be precious, and consequently any delay, that is not absolutely necessary, as much as possible to be avoided. I am now revising the Iliad. It is a business that will cost me four months, perhaps five; for I compare the very words as I go, and if much alteration should occur, must transcribe the whole. The first book I have almost transcribed already. To these five months, Johnson says that nine more must be added for printing; and upon my own experience I will venture to assure you, that the tardiness of printers will make those nine months twelve. There is danger, therefore, that my subscribers may think that I make them wait too long, and that they who know me not may suspect

a bubble. How glad shall I be to read it over in an evening, book by book, as fast as I settle the copy, to you and to Mrs. Unwin! She has been my touchstone always; and without reference to her taste and judgment, I have printed nothing. With one of you at each elbow, I should think myself the happiest of all poets.

The General and I, having broken the ice, are upon the most comfortble terms of correspondence. He writes very affectionately to me, and I say every thing to him that comes uppermost. I could not write frequently to any creature living upon any other terms than those. He tells me of infirmities that he has, which make him less active than he was. I am sorry to hear that he has any such. Alas! alas! he was young when I saw him, only twenty years ago.

I have the most affectionate letter imaginable from Colman, who writes to me like a brother. The chancellor is yet dumb.

May God have you in his keeping, my beloved cousin! Farewell.

LETTER XLIX.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, Feb. 11, 1786.

My dearest cousin,

It must be (I suppose) a fortnight or thereabouts since I wrote last, I feel myself so alert and so ready to write again. Be that as it may, here I come. We talk of nobody but you. What we will do with you when we get you, where you shall walk, where you shall sleep—in short, every thing that bears the remotest relation to your well-being at Olney, occupies all our talking time, which is all that I do not spend at Troy.

I have every reason for writing to you as often as I can; but I have a particular reason for doing it now. I want to tell you, that by the diligence on Wednesday next I mean to send you a quire of my Homer for Maty's perusal. It will contain the first book, and as much of the second as brings us to the catalogue of the ships, and is every morsel of the revised copy that I have transcribed. My dearest cousin, read it yourself, let the General read it, do what you please with it, so that it reach Johnson in due time. But let Maty be the only *critic* that has any thing to do with it. The vexation, the perplexity, that attends a multiplicity of criticisms by various hands, many of which are sure to be futile, many of them ill-founded, and some of them contradictory to others, is inconceivable, except by the author whose ill-fated work happens to be the subject of them. This also appears to me self-evident, that if a work have past under the review of one man of taste and learning, and have had the good fortune to please him, his approbation gives security for that of all others qualified like himself. I speak thus, my dear, after having just escaped from such a storm of trouble, occasioned by endless remarks, hints, suggestions, and objections, as drove me almost to despair, and to the very verge of a resolution to drop my undertaking for ever. With infinite difficulty I at last sifted the chaff from the wheat, availed myself of what appeared to me to be just, and rejected the rest, but not till the labour and anxiety had nearly undone all that Kerr had been doing for me. My beloved cousin, trust me for it, as you safely may, that temper, vanity, and self-importance had nothing to do in all this distress that I suffered. It was merely the effect of an alarm that I could not help taking when I compared the great trouble I had with a few lines only, thus handled,

with that which I foresaw such handling of the whole must necessarily give me. I felt beforehand that my constitution would not bear it. I shall send up this second specimen in a box that I have had made on purpose; and when Maty has done with the copy, and you have done with it yourself, then you must return it in said box to my translatorship. Though Johnson's friend has teased me sadly, I verily believe that I shall have no more such cause to complain of him. We now understand one another; and I firmly believe, that I might have gone the world through before I had found his equal in an accurate and familiar acquaintance with the original.

A letter to Mr. Urban in the last Gentleman's Magazine, of which I's book is the subject, pleases me more than any thing I have seen in the way of eulogium yet. I have no guess of the author.

I do not wish to remind the Chancellor of his promise. Ask you why, my cousin? Because I suppose it would be impossible. He has no doubt forgotten it entirely, and would be obliged to take my word for the truth of it, which I could not bear. We drank tea together with Mrs. C——e and her sister, in King Street, Bloomsbury, and there was the promise made. I said, "Thurlow, I am nobody, and shall be always nobody, and you will be chancellor. You shall provide for me when you are." He smiled, and replied, "I surely will." "These ladies," said I, "are witnesses." He still smiled, and said, "Let them be so, for I will certainly do it." But, alas! twenty-four years have passed since the day of the date thereof; and to mention it now would be to upbraid him with inattention to his plighted troth. Neither do I suppose that he could easily serve such a creature as I am, if he would.

Adieu, whom I love entirely.

LETTER L.

To the Rev. Walter Bagot.

Olney, Feb. 27, 1786.

ALAS! alas! my dear, dear friend, may God himself comfort you! I will not be so absurd as to attempt it. By the close of your letter, it should seem, that in this hour of great trial he withholds not his consolations from you. I know by experience, that they are neither few nor small: and though I feel for you as I never felt for man before, yet do I sincerely rejoice in this, that whereas there is but one true Comforter in the universe, under afflictions such as yours, you both know him and know where to seek him. I thought you a man the most happily mated that I had ever seen, and had great pleasure in your felicity. Pardon me, if now I feel a wish, that, short as my acquaintance with her was, I had never seen her. I should have mourned with you, but not as I do now. Mrs. Unwin sympathizes with you also most sincerely; and you neither are nor will be soon forgotten in such prayers as we can make at Olney. I will not detain you longer now, my poor afflicted friend, than to commit you to the tender mercy of God, and to bid you a sorrowful adieu!

Adieu! ever yours.

LETTER LI.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, April 24, 1786.

YOUR letters are so much my comfort, that I often tremble, lest by any accident I should be disappointed; and the more because you have been, more than once, so engaged in company on the writing day, that I have had a narrow escape. Let me give you a piece of good counsel, my

cousin: Follow my laudable example—write when you can; take Time's forelock in one hand and a pen in the other, and so make sure of your opportunity. It is well for me that you write faster than any body, and more in an hour than other people in two, else I know not what would become of me. When I read your letters, I hear you talk; and I love talking letters dearly, especially from you. Well! the middle of June will not be always a thousand years off; and when it comes I shall hear you, and see you too, and shall not care a farthing then if you do not touch a pen in a month. By the way, you must either send me or bring me some more paper; for before the moon shall have performed a few more revolutions, I shall not have a scrap left; and tedious revolutions they are just now, that is certain.

I give you leave to be as peremptory as you please, especially at a distance; but when you say that you are a Cowper (and the better it is for the Cowpers that such you are, and I give them joy of you, with all my heart), you must not forget, that I boast myself a Cowper too, and have my humours, and fancies, and purposes, and determinations, as well as others of my name, and hold them as fast as they can. *You* indeed tell *me* how often I shall see you when you come. A pretty story truly. I am an *he* Cowper, my dear, and claim the privileges that belong to my noble sex. But these matters shall be settled, as my cousin Agamemnon used to say, at a more convenient time.

I shall rejoice to see the letter you promise me; for though I met with a morsel of praise last week, I do not know that the week current is likely to produce me any; and having lately been pretty much pampered with that diet, I expect to find myself rather hungry by the time when your next letter shall arrive. It will therefore be very opportune. The morsel above alluded to, came from—whom do you think? From ——, but she desires that her authorship may be a secret. And in my answer I promised not to divulge it, except to you. It is a pretty copy of verses, neatly written, and well turned; and when you come you shall see them. I intend to keep all pretty things to myself till then, that they may serve me as a bait to lure you hither more effectually. The last letter that I had from ——, I received so many years since, that it seems as if it had reached me a good while before I was born.

I was grieved at the heart that the General could not come, and that illness was in part the cause that hindered him. I have sent him, by his express desire, a new edition of the first book, and half the second. He would not suffer me to send it to you, my dear, lest you should post it away to Maty at once. He did not give that reason, but being shrewd I found it.

The grass begins to grow, and the leaves to bud, and every thing is preparing to be beautiful against you come. Adieu!

You inquire of our walks, I perceive, as well as our rides. They are beautiful. You inquire also concerning a cellar. You have two cellars. Oh! what years have passed since we took the same walks, and drank out of the same bottle! But a few weeks more, and then!

LETTER LII.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, May 15, 1786.

My dearest cousin,

From this very morning I begin to date the last month of our long separation, and confidently and most

comfortably hope, that before the 15th of June shall present itself, we shall have seen each other. Is it not so? And will it not be one of the most extraordinary æras of my extraordinary life? A year ago we neither corresponded, nor expected to meet in this world. But this world is a scene of marvellous events, many of them more marvellous than fiction itself would dare to hazard; and (blessed be God!) they are not all of the distressing kind. Now and then, in the course of an existence, whose hue is for the most part sable, a day turns up that makes amends for many sighs and many subjects of complaint. Such a day shall I account the day of your arrival at Olney.

Wherefore is it (canst thou tell me?) that, together with all those delightful sensations to which the sight of a long absent dear friend gives birth, there is a mixture of something painful, flutterings, and tumults, and I know not what accompaniments of our pleasure, that are, in fact, perfectly foreign from the occasion? Such I feel, when I think of our meeting, and such, I suppose, feel you; and the nearer the crisis approaches, the more I am sensible of them. I know, beforehand, that they will increase with every turn of the wheels that shall convey me to Newport, when I shall set out to meet you; and that when we actually meet, the pleasure, and this unaccountable pain together, will be as much as I shall be able to support. I am utterly at a loss for the cause; and can only resolve it into that appointment, by which it has been foreordained that all human delights shall be qualified and mingled with their contraries. For there is nothing formidable in you. To me, at least, there is nothing such; no, not even in your menaces, unless when you threaten me to write no more. Nay, I verily believe, did I not know you to be what you are, and had less affection for you than I have, I should have fewer of these emotions, of which I would have none, if I could help it. But a fig for them all! Let us resolve to combat with, and to conquer them. They are dreams. They are illusions of the judgment. Some enemy that hates the happiness of human kind, and is ever industrious to dash it, works them in us; and their being so perfectly unreasonable as they are, is a proof of it. Nothing, that is such, can be the work of a good agent. This I know too, by experience, that, like all other illusions, they exist only by force of imagination, are indebted for their prevalence to the absence of their object, and, in a few moments after its appearance cease. So, then, this is a settled point, and the case stands thus: You will tremble as you draw near to Newport, and so shall I. But we will both recollect, that there is no reason why we should; and this recollection will, at least, have some little effect in our favour. We will likewise both take the comfort of what we know to be true, that the tumult will soon cease, and the pleasure long survive the pain, even as long, I trust, as we ourselves shall survive it.

What you say of Maty gives me all the consolation that you intended We both think it highly probable that you suggest the true cause of his displeasure, when you suppose him mortified at not having had a part of the translation laid before him, ere the specimen was published. The General was very much hurt, and calls his censures harsh and unreasonable. He likewise sent me a consolatory letter on the occasion, in which he took the kindest pains to heal the wound that (he supposed) I might have suffered. I am not naturally insensible; and the sensibilities that I had by nature have been wonderfully enhanced by a long

series of shocks, given to a frame of nerves that was never very athletic. I feel accordingly, whether painful or pleasant, in the extreme; am easily elevated, and easily cast down. The frown of a critic freezes my poetical powers, and discourages me to a degree that makes me ashamed of my own weakness. Yet I presently recover my confidence again. The half of what you so kindly say in your last, would at any time restore my spirits; and, being said by you, is infallible. I am not ashamed to confess, that, having commenced an author, I am most abundantly desirous to succeed as such. *I have (what perhaps you little suspect me of) in my nature an infinite share of ambition.* But with it I have at the same time, as you well know, an equal share of diffidence. To this combination of opposite qualities it has been owing, that, till lately, I stole through life without undertaking any thing, yet always wishing to distinguish myself. At last I ventured—ventured too in the only path, that, at so late a period, was yet open to me; and am determined, if God have not determined otherwise, to work my way, through the obscurity that has been so long my portion, into notice. Every thing, therefore, that seems to threaten this my favourite purpose with disappointment, affects me nearly. I suppose that all ambitious minds are in the same predicament. He, who seeks distinction, must be sensible of disapprobation, exactly in the same proportion as he desires applause. And now, my precious cousin, I have unfolded my heart to you in this particular, without a speck of dissimulation. Some people, and good people too, would blame me. But you will not; and they (I think) would blame without just cause. We certainly do not honour God when we bury, or when we neglect to improve, as far as we may, whatever talent he may have bestowed on us, whether it be little or much. In natural things, as well as in spiritual, it is a never-failing truth, that to him, who *hath* (that is, to him who occupies what he hath diligently, and so as to increase it), more shall be given. Set me down, therefore, my dear, for an industrious rhymer, so long as I shall have the ability. For in this only way is it possible for me, so far as I can see, either to honour God or to serve man, or even to serve myself.

I rejoice to hear that Mr. Throckmorton wishes to be on a more intimate footing. I am shy, and suspect that he is not very much otherwise; and the consequence has been, that we have mutually wished an acquaintance without being able to accomplish it. Blessings on you for the hint that you dropped on the subject of the house at Weston! For the burthen of my song is, "Since we have met once again, let us never be separated, as we have been, more."

LETTER LIII.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, May 29, 1786.

Thou dear, comfortable cousin, whose letters, among all that I receive, have this property peculiarly their own, that I expect them without trembling, and never find any thing in them that does not give me pleasure! for which, therefore, I would take nothing in exchange that the world could give me, save and except that for which I must exchange them soon (and happy shall I be to do so), your own company. That, indeed, is delayed a little too long; to my impatience, at least it

seems so, who find the spring, backward as it is, too forward, because many of its beauties will have faded before you will have an opportunity to see them. We took our customary walk yesterday in the wilderness at Weston, and saw, with regret, the laburnums, syringas, and guelder-roses, some of them blown, and others just upon the point of blowing, and could not help observing—All these will be gone before lady Hesketh comes. Still, however, there will be roses, and jasmine, and honeysuckle, and shady walks, and cool alcoves, and you will partake them with us. But I want you to have a share of every thing that is delightful here, and cannot bear that the advance of the season should steal away a single pleasure before you can come to enjoy it.

Every day I think of you, and almost all day long; I will venture to say, that even *you* were never so expected in your life. I called last week at the Quaker's to see the furniture of your bed, the fame of which had reached me. It is, I assure you, superb; of printed cotton, and the subject classical. Every morning you will open your eyes on Phaeton kneeling to Apollo, and imploring his father to grant him the conduct of his chariot for a day. May your sleep be as sound as your bed will be sumptuous, and your nights, at least, will be well provided for.

I shall send up the sixth and seventh books of the Iliad shortly, and shall address them to you. You will forward them to the General. I long to show you my workshop, and to see you sitting on the opposite side of my table. We shall be as close packed as two wax figures in an old-fashioned picture frame. I am writing in it now. It is the place in which I fabricate all my verse in summer time. I rose an hour sooner than usual this morning that I might finish my sheet before breakfast, for I must write this day to the General.

The grass under my windows is all bespangled with dew-drops, and the birds are singing in the apple trees among the blossoms. Never poet had a more commodious oratory in which to invoke his Muse.

I have made your heart ache too often, my poor dear cousin, with talking about my fits of dejection. Something has happened that has led me to the subject, or I would have mentioned them more sparingly. Do not suppose, or suspect, that I treat you with reserve; there is nothing, in which I am concerned, that you shall not be made acquainted with. But the tale is too long for a letter. I will only add, for your present satisfaction, that the cause is not exterior, that it is not within the reach of human aid, and that yet I have a hope myself, and Mrs. Unwin a strong persuasion, of its removal. I am indeed even now, and have been for a considerable time, sensible of a change for the better, and expect, with good reason, a comfortable lift from you. Guess then, my beloved cousin, with what wishes I look forward to the time of your arrival, from whose coming I promise myself not only pleasure, but peace of mind, at least an additional share of it. At present it is an uncertain and transient guest with me; but the joy with which I shall see and converse with you at Olney, may, perhaps, make it an abiding one.

LETTER LIV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear William,

How apt we are to deceive ourselves where self is in question!

You say I am in your debt, and I accounted you in mine: a mistake to which you must attribute my arrears, if indeed I owe you any; for I am not backward to write where the uppermost thought is welcome.

I am obliged to you for all the books you have occasionally furnished me with: I did not indeed read many of Johnson's Classics: those of established reputation are so fresh in my memory, though many years have intervened since I made them my companions, that it was like reading what I read yesterday over again; and as to the minor Classics, I did not think them worth reading at all. I tasted most of them, and did not like them. It is a great thing to be indeed a poet, and does not happen to more than one man in a century. Churchill, the great Churchill, deserved the name of poet. I have read him twice, and some of his pieces three times over; and the last time with more pleasure than the first. The pitiful scribbler of his life seems to have undertaken that task, for which he was entirely unqualified, merely because it afforded him an opportunity to traduce him. He has inserted in it but one anecdote of consequence, for which he refers you to a novel, and introduces the story with doubts about the truth of it. But his barrenness as a biographer I could forgive, if the simpleton had not thought himself a judge of his writings, and under the erroneous influence of that thought, informs his reader that "Gotham," "Independence," and the "Times," were catchpennies. Gotham, unless I am a greater blockhead than he, which I am far from believing, is a noble and beautiful poem, and a poem with which I make no doubt the author took as much pains as with any he ever wrote. Making allowance (and Dryden perhaps, in his "Absalom and Achitophel," stands in need of the same indulgence) for an unwarrantable use of Scripture, it appears to me to be a masterly performance. Independence is a most animated piece, full of strength and spirit, and marked with that bold masculine character, which I think is the great peculiarity of this writer. And the Times (except that the subject is disgusting to the last degree) stands equally high in my opinion. He is indeed a careless writer for the most part; but where shall we find, in any of those authors, who finish their works with the exactness of a Flemish pencil, those bold and daring strokes of fancy, those numbers so hazardously ventured upon and so happily finished, the matter so compressed and yet so clear, and the colouring so sparingly laid on and yet with such a beautiful effect! In short, it is not his least praise, that he is never guilty of those faults as a writer, which he lays to the charge of others: a proof that he did not judge by a borrowed standard, or from rules laid down by critics, but that he was qualified to do it by his own native powers, and his great superiority of genius. For he that wrote so much, and so fast, would, through inadvertence and hurry, unavoidably have departed from rules, which he might have found in books; but his own truly poetical talent was a guide which could not suffer him to err. A race horse is graceful in his swiftest pace, and never makes an awkward motion, though he is pushed to his utmost speed. A cart-horse might perhaps be taught to play tricks in the riding-school, and might prance and curvet like his betters; but at some unlucky time would be sure to betray the baseness of his original. It is an affair of very little consequence perhaps to the well-being of mankind, but I cannot help regretting that he died so soon. Those words of Virgil, upon the immature

death of Marcellus, might serve for his epitaph:—

*Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata, neque ultra Esse sinent———.**

Yours.

LETTER LV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear friend,

I FIND the Register in all respects an entertaining medley; but especially in this, that it has brought to my view some long forgotten pieces of my own production. I mean, by the way, two or three. Those I have marked with my own initials; and you may be sure I found them peculiarly agreeable, as they had not only the grace of being mine, but that of novelty likewise to recommend them. It is at least twenty years since I saw them. You, I think, was never a dabbler in rhyme. I have been one ever since I was fourteen years of age, when I began with translating an elegy of Tibullus. I have no more right to the name of a poet, than a maker of mouse-traps has to that of an engineer; but my little exploits in this way have at times amused me so much, that I have often wished myself a good one. Such a talent in verse as mine is, like a child's rattle, very entertaining to the trifler that uses it, and very disagreeable to all beside. But it has served to rid me of some melancholy moments, for I only take it up as a gentleman performer does his fiddle. I have this peculiarity belonging to me as a rhymist, that though I am charmed to a great degree with my own work while it is on the anvil, I can seldom bear to look at it when it is once finished. The more I contemplate it, the more it loses its value, till I am at last disgusted with it. I then throw it by, take it up again perhaps ten years after, and am as much delighted with it as at the first.

Few people have the art of being agreeable when they talk of themselves; if you are not weary, therefore, you pay me a high compliment.

I dare say miss S—— was much diverted with the conjecture of her friends. The true key to the pleasure she found at Olney was plain enough to be seen; but they chose to overlook it. She brought with her a disposition to be pleased; which whoever does is sure to find a visit agreeable, because they make it so.

Yours.

LETTER LVI.

To Lady Hesketh.

Weston Lodge, Nov. 26, 1786.

IT is my birth-day, my beloved cousin, and I determine to employ a part of it, that it may not be destitute of festivity, in writing to you. The dark, thick fog that has obscured it, would have been a burthen to me at Olney; but here I have hardly attended to it. The neatness and snugness of our abode compensates all the dreariness of the season; and whether the ways are wet or dry, our house at least is always warm and commodious. Oh for you, my cousin, to partake these comforts with us! I will not begin already to tease you upon that subject; but Mrs. Unwin remembers to have heard from your own lips, that you hate London in the spring. Perhaps, therefore, by that time you may be glad to escape from a scene which will be every day growing more disagreeable, that you may enjoy the comforts of the Lodge. You well know that the best house has a desolate appearance unfurnished. This house accordingly, since it has been occupied by us and our *meubles*, is as much superior to what it was when

* This youth, the blissful vision of a day,
Shall just be shown to earth, then snatched away.
DRYDEN.

you saw it, as you can imagine. The parlour is even elegant. When I say that the parlour is elegant, I do not mean to insinuate that the study is not so. It is neat, warm, and silent; and a much better study than I deserve, if I do not produce in it an incomparable translation of Homer. I think every day of those lines of Milton, and congratulate myself on having obtained, before I am quite superannuated, what he seems not to have hoped for sooner:

> "And may at length my weary age
> Find out the peaceful hermitage!"

For it is not a hermitage, at least it is a much better thing; and you must always understand, my dear, that when poets talk of cottages, hermitages, and such-like things, they mean a house with six sashes in front, two comfortable parlours, a smart staircase, and three bed-chambers of convenient dimensions; in short, exactly such a house as this.

The Throckmortons continue the most obliging neighbours in the world. One morning last week, they both went with me to the cliffs—a scene, my dear, in which you would delight beyond measure, but which you cannot visit except in the spring or autumn. The heat of summer, and clinging dirt of winter, would destroy you. What is called the cliff is no cliff, nor at all like one, but a beautiful terrace, sloping gently down to the Ouse, and from the brow of which, though not lofty, you have a view of such a valley as makes that which you see from the hills near Olney, and which I have had the honour to celebrate, an affair of no consideration.

Wintry as the weather is, do not suspect that it confines me. I ramble daily, and every day change my ramble. Wherever I go, I find short grass under my feet; and when I have travelled perhaps five miles, come home with shoes not at all too dirty for a drawing-room. I was pacing yesterday under the elms that surround the field in which stands the great alcove, when lifting my eyes I saw two black genteel figures bolt through a hedge into the path where I was walking. You guess already who they were, and that they could be nobody but our neighbours. They had seen me from a hill at a distance, and had traversed a great turnip field to get at me. You see, therefore, my dear, that I am in some request: alas! in too much request with some people. The verses of Cadwallader have found me at last.

I am charmed with your account of our little cousin* at Kensington. If the world does not spoil him hereafter, he will be a valuable man.—Good night, and may God bless thee!

LETTER LVII.

To Samuel Rose, Esq.

Weston, Oct. 19, 1787.

Dear sir,

A SUMMONS from Johnson, which I received yesterday, calls my attention once more to the business of translation. Before I begin I am willing to catch though but a short opportunity to acknowledge your last favour. The necessity of applying myself with all diligence to a long work, that has been but too long interrupted, will make my opportunities of writing rare in future.

Air and exercise are necessary to all men, but particularly so to the man, whose mind labours; and to him, who has been all his life accustomed to much of both, they are necessary in the extreme. My time, since we parted, has been devoted entirely to the recovery of health and strength for this service, and I am willing to hope with good effect. Ten

* Lord Cowper.

months have passed since I discontinued my poetical efforts; I do not expect to find the same readiness as before till exercise of the neglected faculty, such as it is, shall have restored it to me.

You find yourself, I hope, by this time as comfortably situated in your new abode, as in a new abode one can be. I enter perfectly into all your feelings on occasion of the change. A sensible mind cannot do violence even to a local attachment without much pain. When my father died I was young, too young to have reflected much. He was rector of Berkhamstead, and there I was born. It had never occurred to me that a parson has no fee-simple in the house and glebe he occupies.—There was neither tree, nor gate, nor stile, in all that country, to which I did not feel a relation; and the house itself I preferred to a palace. I was sent for from London to attend him in his last illness, and he died just before I arrived. Then, and not till then, I felt for the first time that I and my native place were disunited for ever. I sighed a long adieu to fields and woods, from which I once thought I should never be parted; and was at no time so sensible of their beauties as just when I left them all behind me, to return no more.

LETTER LVIII.

To Lady Hesketh.

The Lodge, Nov. 10, 1787.

THE parliament, my dearest cousin, prorogued continually, is a meteor dancing before my eyes, promising me my wish only to disappoint me; and none but the king and his ministers can tell when you and I shall come together. I hope however that the period, though so often postponed, is not far distant; and that once more I shall behold you, and experience your power to make winter gay and sprightly.

I have a kitten, the drollest of all creatures that ever wore a cat's skin. Her gambols are not to be described, and would be incredible if they could. In point of size she is likely to be a kitten always, being extremely small of her age; but time, I suppose, that spoils every thing, will make her also a cat. You will see her, I hope, before that melancholy period shall arrive; for no wisdom that she may gain by experience and reflection hereafter will compensate the loss of her present hilarity. She is dressed in a tortoise-shell suit, and I know that you will delight in her.

Mrs. Throckmorton carries us tomorrow in her chaise to Chicheley. The event however must be supposed to depend on elements, at least on the state of the atmosphere, which is turbulent beyond measure. Yesterday it thundered, last night it lightened, and at three this morning I saw the sky as red as a city in flames could have made it. I have a leech in a bottle that foretels all these prodigies and convulsions of nature. No, not, as you will naturally conjecture, by articulate utterance of oracular notices, but by a variety of gesticulations, which here I have not room to give an account of. Suffice it to say, that no change of weather surprises him; and that in point of the earliest and most accurate intelligence, he is worth all the barometers in the world. None of them all indeed can make the least pretence to foretel thunder—a species of capacity of which he has given the most unequivocal evidence. I gave but sixpence for him, which is a groat more than the market price; though he is in fact, or rather would be, if leeches were not found in every ditch, an invaluable acquisition.

LETTER LIX.

To Lady Hesketh.

The Lodge, Nov. 27, 1787.

IT is the part of wisdom, my dearest cousin, to sit down contented under the demands of necessity, because they are such. I am sensible that you cannot, in my uncle's present infirm state, and of which it is not possible to expect any considerable amendment, indulge either us or yourself, with a journey to Weston. Yourself, I say, both because I know it will give you pleasure to see *Causidice mi** once more, especially in the comfortable abode where you have placed him; and because, after so long an imprisonment in London, you, who love the country, and have a taste for it, would of course be glad to return to it. For my own part, to me it is ever new; and though I have now been an inhabitant of this village a twelvemonth, and have during the half of that time been at liberty to expatiate and to make discoveries, I am daily finding out fresh scenes and walks, which you would never be satisfied with enjoying—some of them are unapproachable by you either on foot or in your carriage. Had you twenty toes (whereas I suppose you have but ten) you could not reach them; and coach-wheels have never been seen there since the flood. Before it indeed (as Burnet says that the earth was then perfectly free from all inequalities in its surface), they might have been seen there every day. We have other walks both upon hill tops, and in valleys beneath, some of which by the help of your carriage, and many of them without its help, would be always at your command.

On Monday morning last, Sam brought me word that there was a man in the kitchen who desired to speak with me. I ordered him in. A plain, decent, elderly figure made its appearance, and, being desired to sit, spoke as follows: "Sir, I am clerk of the parish of All-Saints in Northampton; brother of Mr. C. the upholsterer. It is customary for the person in my office to annex to a bill of mortality, which he publishes at Christmas, a copy of verses. You will do me a great favour, sir, if you would furnish me with one." To this I replied, "Mr. C., you have several men of genius in your town, why have you not applied to some of them? There is a namesake of yours in particular, C——, the statuary, who, every body knows, is a first-rate maker of verses. He surely is the man of all the world for your purpose."—"Alas! sir, I have heretofore borrowed help from him, but he is a gentleman of so much reading, that the people of our town cannot understand him." I confess to you, my dear, I felt all the force of the compliment implied in this speech, and was almost ready to answer, Perhaps, my good friend, they may find me unintelligible too for the same reason. But on asking him whether he had walked over to Weston on purpose to implore the assistance of my Muse, and on his replying in the affirmative, I felt my mortified vanity a little consoled, and pitying the poor man's distress, which appeared to be considerable, promised to supply him.—The waggon has accordingly gone this day to Northampton loaded in part with my effusions in the mortuary style. A fig for poets who write epitaphs upon individuals. I have written *one*, that serves *two hundred* persons.

A few days since I received a second very obliging letter from Mr. M——. He tells me that his own papers, which are by far, he is sorry to say, the most numerous, are marked V. I. Z. Accordingly, my dear,

* The appellation which Sir Thomas Hesketh used to give him in jest when he was of the Temple.

I am happy to find that I am engaged in a correspondence with Mr. Viz, a gentleman for whom I have always entertained the profoundest veneration. But the serious fact is, that the papers distinguished by those signatures have ever pleased me most, and struck me as the work of a sensible man, who knows the world well, and has more of Addison's delicate humour than any body.

A poor man begged food at the hall lately. The cook gave him some vermicelli soup. He ladled it about some time with the spoon, and then returned it to her, saying, "I am a poor man, it is true, and I am very hungry, but yet I cannot eat broth with maggots in it." Once more, my dear, a thousand thanks for your box full of good things, useful things, and beautiful things. Yours ever.

SECTION III.

FROM THE LETTERS OF DR. BEATTIE, SIR WM. JONES, AND OTHERS.

LETTER I.

Dr. Beattie to Robert Arbuthnot, Esq.

Aberdeen, 12th December, 1763.

SINCE you left us, I have been reading Tasso's "Jerusalem," in the translation lately published by Hoole. I was not a little anxious to peruse a poem which is so famous over all Europe, and has so often been mentioned as a rival to the "Iliad," "Æneid," and "Paradise Lost." It is certainly a noble work; and though it seems to me to be inferior to the three poems just mentioned, yet I cannot help thinking it in the rank next to these. As for the other modern attempts at the "Epopee," the "Henriade" of Voltaire, the "Epigoniad" of Wilkie, the "Leonidas" of Glover, not to mention the "Arthur" of Blackmore, they are not to be compared with it. Tasso possesses an exuberant and sublime imagination; though in exuberance it seems, in my opinion, inferior to our Spenser, and in sublimity inferior to Milton. Were I to compare Milton's genius with Tasso's, I would say, that the sublime of the latter is flashy and fluctuating, while that of the former diffuses an uniform, steady, and vigorous blaze: Milton is more majestic, Tasso more dazzling. Dryden, it seems, was of opinion, that the "Jerusalem Delivered" was the only poem of modern times that deserved the name of epic; but it is certain that criticism was not this writer's talent; and I think it is evident, from some passages of his works, that he either did not, or would not, understand the "Paradise Lost." Tasso borrows his plot and principal characters from Homer, but his manner resembles Virgil's. He is certainly much obliged to Virgil, and scruples not to imitate, nor to translate him on many occasions. In the *pathetic*, he is far inferior both to Homer, to Virgil, and to Milton. His characters, though different, are not always distinct, and want those

masterly and distinguishing strokes, which the genius of Homer and Shakspeare, and of them only, knows how to delineate. Tasso excels in describing pleasurable scenes, and seems peculiarly fond of such as have a reference to the passion of love. Yet, in characterizing this passion, he is far inferior, not only to Milton, but also to Virgil, whose fourth book he has been at great pains to imitate. The translation is smooth and flowing; but in dignity, and variety of numbers, is often defective, and often labours under a feebleness and prolixity of phrase, evidently proceeding either from want of skill, or from want of leisure in the versifier.

LETTER II.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 30th January, 1766.

YOUR zeal in promoting my interest demands my warmest acknowledgments; yet, for want of adequate expressions, I scarce know in what manner to pay them. I must therefore leave you to guess at my gratitude, by the emotions which would arise in your own heart, on receiving a very important favour from a person of whom you had merited nothing, and to whom you could make no just return.

I suppose you have seen my letter to Dr. Blacklock. I hope, in due time, to be acquainted with your sentiments concerning it. I know not whether I have gained my point or not: but in composing that letter I was more studious of simplicity of diction than in any other of my pieces. I am not, indeed, in this respect, so very scrupulous as some critics of these times. I see no harm in using an expressive epithet, when, without the use of such an epithet, one cannot do justice to his idea. Even a compounded epithet, provided it be suitable to the genius of our language, and authenticated by some good writer, may often, in my opinion, produce a good effect. My notion of simplicity discards every thing from style which is affected, superfluous, indefinite, or obscure; but admits every grace, which, without encumbering a sentiment, does really embellish and enforce it. I am no friend to those prettinesses of modern style, which one may call the pompous earrings and flounces of the Muses, which, with some writers, are so highly in vogue at present: they may, by their glare and fluttering, take off the eye from imperfections; but I am convinced they disguise and disfigure the charms of genuine beauty.

I have of late been much engaged in metaphysics; at least I have been labouring with all my might to overturn that visionary science. I am a member of a club in this town, who style themselves the Philosophical Society. We have meetings every fortnight, and deliver discourses in our turn. I hope you will not think the worse of this society when I tell you, that to it the world is indebted for "A comparative View of the Faculties of Man," and an "Enquiry into Human Nature, on the Principles of Common Sense." Criticism is the field in which I have hitherto (chiefly at least) chosen to expatiate; but an accidental question lately furnished me with a hint, which I made the subject of a two hours' discourse at our last meeting. I have for some time wished for an opportunity of publishing something relating to the business of my own profession, and I think I have now found an opportunity: for the doctrine of my last discourse seems to be of importance, and I have already finished two-thirds of my plan. My doctrine is this: that as we know nothing of the eternal relations of things, *that* to us *is* and must be

truth, which we feel that we must believe; and *that* to us is falsehood, which we feel that we must disbelieve. I have shown, that all genuine reasoning does ultimately terminate in certain principles, which it is impossible to disbelieve, and as impossible to prove: that therefore the ultimate standard of truth to us is common sense, or that instinctive conviction into which all true reasoning does resolve itself: that therefore what contradicts common sense is in itself absurd, however subtle the arguments which support it: for such is the ambiguity and insufficiency of language, that it is easy to argue on either side of any question with acuteness sufficient to confound one who is not expert in the art of reasoning. My principles, in the main, are not essentially different from Dr. Reid's; but they seem to offer a more compendious method of destroying scepticism. I intend to show (and have already in part shown) that all sophistical reasoning is marked with certain characters which distinguish it from true investigation: and thus I flatter myself I shall be able to discover a method of detecting sophistry, even when one is not able to give a logical confutation of its arguments. I intend further to inquire into the nature of that modification of intellect which qualifies a man for being a sceptic; and I think I am able to prove, that it is not genius, but the want of it. However, it will be summer before I can finish my project. I own it is not without indignation, that I see sceptics and their writings (which are the bane, not only of science, but also of virtue) so much in vogue in the present age.

LETTER III.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 18th September, 1766.

You flatter me very agreeably, by wishing me to engage in a translation of Tasso's "Jerusalem." If I had all the other accomplishments necessary to fit me for such an undertaking (which is by no means the case), I have not as yet acquired a sufficient knowledge of the Italian language, although I understand it tolerably well. My proficiency would have been much more considerable, if my health had allowed me to study; but I have been obliged to estrange myself from books for some months past. I intend to persist in my resolution of acquiring that language, for I am wonderfully delighted with the Italian poetry. It does not seem to abound much in those strokes of fancy that raise admiration and astonishment, in which I think the English very much superior; but it possesses all the milder graces in an eminent degree; in simplicity, harmony, delicacy, and tenderness, it is altogether without a rival. I cannot well account for that neglect of the Italian literature, which, for about a century past, has been fashionable among us. I believe Mr. Addison may have been instrumental in introducing, or at least in vindicating it; though I am inclined to think, that he took upon trust, from Boileau, that censure which he past upon the Italian poets, and which has been current among the critics ever since the days of the "Spectator."

A good translation of Tasso would be a very valuable accession to English literature; but it would be a most difficult undertaking, on account of the genius of our language, which, though in the highest degree copious, expressive, and sonorous, is not to be compared with the Italian in delicacy, sweetness, and simplicity of composition; and these are qualities so characteristical of Tasso, that a translator would do the highest injustice to his author, who should fail in transfusing them into his version. Besides, a work of such a nature

must not only be laborious but expensive; so that a prudent person would not choose to engage in it without some hope, not only of being indemnified, but even rewarded; and such a hope it would be madness in me to entertain. Yet, to show that I am not averse from the work (for, luckily for poor bards, poetry is sometimes its own reward, and is at any time amply rewarded when it gratifies the desire of a friend), I design, as soon as I have leisure, and sufficient skill in the language, to try my hand at a short specimen. In the mean time, I flatter myself you will not think the worse of me for not making a thousand protestations of my insufficiency, and as many acknowledgments of my gratitude for the honour you do me in supposing me capable of such a work. The truth is, I have so much to say on this subject, that if I were only to begin, I should never have done. Your friendship and your good opinion, which I shall ever account it my honour to cultivate, I do indeed value more than I can express.

Your neglect of the modern philosophical sceptics, who have too much engaged the attention of these times, does equal honour to your understanding and to your heart. To suppose that every thing may be made matter of dispute, is an exceeding false principle, subversive of all true science, and prejudicial to the happiness of mankind. To confute, without convincing, is a common case, and indeed a very easy matter; in all conviction (at least in all moral and religious conviction), the heart is engaged as well as the understanding; and the understanding may be satisfied, or at least confounded, with a doctrine from which the heart recoils with the strongest aversion.—This is not the language of a logician; but this, I hope, is the language of an honest man, who considers all science as frivolous, which does not make men wiser and better; and to puzzle with words, without producing conviction (which is all that our metaphysical sceptics have been able to do), can never promote either the wisdom or the virtue of mankind. It is strange that men should so often forget that "Happiness is our being's end and aim." Happiness is desirable for its own sake; truth is desirable only as a means of producing happiness; for who would not prefer an agreeable delusion to a melancholy truth? What, then, is the use of that philosophy, which aims to inculcate truth at the expense of happiness, by introducing doubt and disbelief in the place of confidence and hope? Surely the promoters of all such philosophy are either the enemies of mankind or the dupes of their own most egregious folly. I mean not to make any concessions in favour of metaphysical truth; genuine truth and genuine happiness were never inconsistent: but metaphysical truth (such as we find in our sceptical systems) is not genuine, for it is perpetually changing; and no wonder, since it depends not on the common sense of mankind (which is always the same), but varies according as the talents and the inclinations of different authors are different. The doctrines of metaphysical scepticism are either true or false; if false, we have little to do with them; if true, they prove the fallacy of the human faculties, and therefore prove too much; for it follows, as an undeniable consequence, that all human doctrines whatsoever (themselves not excepted) are fallacious, and consequently pernicious, insignificant, and vain.

LETTER IV.

Dr. Beattie to Dr. Blacklock.

Aberdeen, 22d September, 1766.

I AM not a little flattered by your

friendly and spirited vindication of the poem on *Bufo*. Among the invidious and malicious, I have got a few enemies on account of that performance; among the candid and generous, not one. This, joined to the approbation of my own conscience, is entirely sufficient to make me easy on that head. I have not yet heard whether my little work has been approved or condemned in England. I have not even heard whether it has been published or not. However, the days of romantic hope are now happily over with me, as well as the desire of public applause; a desire of which I never had any title to expect the gratification; and which, though I had been able to gratify it, would not have contributed a single mite to my happiness. Yet I am thankful to Providence for having endued me with an inclination to poetry; for, though I have never been supremely blest in my own Muse, I have certainly been gratified, in the most exquisite degree, by the productions of others.

Those pieces of mine, from which I have received the highest entertainment, are such as are altogether improper for publication, being written in a sort of burlesque humour, for the amusement of some particular friend, or for some select company: of these I have a pretty large collection; and though I should be ashamed to be publicly known as the author of many of them, I cannot help entertaining a certain partiality towards them; arising, perhaps, from this circumstance in their favour, that the pleasure they have yielded me has been altogether sincere, unmixed with that chagrin which never fails to attend an unfortunate publication.

Not long ago I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser, in which I propose to give full scope to my inclination, and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humour strikes me; for, if I mistake not, the manner which I have adopted admits equally of all these kinds of composition. I have written one hundred and fifty lines, and am surprised to find the structure of that complicated stanza so little troublesome. I was always fond of it; for I think it the most harmonious that ever was contrived. It admits of more variety of pauses than either the couplet or the alternate rhyme; and it concludes with a pomp and majesty of sound, which, to my ear, is wonderfully delightful. It seems also very well adapted to the genius of our language, which, from its irregularity of inflexion, and number of monosyllables, abounds in diversified terminations, and consequently renders our poetry susceptible of an endless variety of legitimate rhymes. But I am so far from intending this performance for the press, that I am morally certain it never will be finished. I shall add a stanza now and then, when I am at leisure, and when I have no humour for any other amusement: but I am resolved to write no more poetry with a view to publication, till I see some dawnings of a poetical taste among the generality of readers, of which, however, there is not at present any thing like an appearance.

My employment, and indeed my inclination, leads me rather to prose composition; and in this way I have much to do. The doctrines commonly comprehended under the name of moral philosophy are at present over-run with metaphysics, a luxuriant and tenacious weed, which seldom fails to choke and extirpate the wholesome plants, which it was perhaps intended to support and shelter. To this literary weed I have an insuperable aversion, which becomes stronger and stronger, in pro-

portion as I grow more and more acquainted with its nature, and qualities, and fruits. It is very agreeable to the paradoxical and licentious spirit of the age: but I am thoroughly convinced that it is fatal to true science, an enemy to the fine arts, destructive of genuine sentiment, and prejudicial to the virtue and happiness of mankind.

LETTER V.

Dr. Beattie to the Honourable Charles Boyd.

Aberdeen, 16th November, 1766.

Of all the chagrins with which my present infirm state of health is attended, none afflicts me more than my inability to perform the duties of friendship. The offer which you were generously pleased to make me of your correspondence, flatters me extremely; but alas! I have not as yet been able to avail myself of it. While the good weather continued, I strolled about the country, and made many strenuous attempts to run away from this odious giddiness; but the more I struggled, the more closely it seemed to stick by me. About a fortnight ago the hurry of my winter business began; and at the same time my malady recurred with more violence than ever, rendering me at once incapable of reading, writing, and thinking. Luckily I am now a little better, so as to be able to read a page, and write a sentence or two without stopping; which, I assure you, is a very great matter. My hopes and my spirits begin to revive once more. I flatter myself I shall soon get rid of this infirmity; nay, that I shall ere long be in the way of becoming a *great man*. For have I not head-achs, like Pope? vertigo, like Swift? grey hairs, like Homer? Do I not wear large shoes (for fear of corns), like Virgil? and sometimes complain of sore eyes (though not of *lippitude*), like Horace? Am I not at this present writing invested with a garment not less ragged than that of Socrates? Like Joseph, the patriarch, I am a mighty dreamer of dreams; like Nimrod, the hunter, I am an eminent builder of castles (in the air). I procrastinate, like Julius Cæsar; and very lately, in imitation of Don Quixote, I rode a horse, lean, old, and lazy, like Rosinante. Sometimes, like Cicero, I write bad verses; and sometimes bad prose, like Virgil. This last sentence I have on the authority of Seneca. I am of small stature, like Alexander the Great; I am somewhat inclinable to fatness, like Dr. Arbuthnot and Aristotle; and I drink brandy and water, like Mr. Boyd. I might compare myself, in relation to many other infirmities, to many other *great men;* but if Fortune is not influenced in my favour by the particulars already enumerated, I shall despair of ever recommending myself to her good graces. I once had some thought of soliciting her patronage on the score of my resembling great men in their good qualities; but I had so little to say on that subject, that I could not for my life furnish matter for one well-rounded period: and you know a short ill-turned speech is very improper to be used in an address to a female deity.

Do not you think there is a sort of antipathy between philosophical and poetical genius? I question whether any one person was ever eminent for both. Lucretius lays aside the poet when he assumes the philosopher, and the philosopher when he assumes the poet: in the one character he is truly excellent, in the other he is absolutely nonsensical. Hobbes was a tolerable metaphysician, but his poetry is the worst that ever was. Pope's "Essay on Man" is the finest philosophical po-

em in the world; but it seems to me to do more honour to the imagination than to the understanding of its author: I mean its sentiments are noble and affecting, its images and allusions apposite, beautiful, and new; its wit transcendently excellent: but the scientific part of it is very exceptionable. Whatever Pope borrows from Leibnitz, like most other metaphysical theories, is frivolous and unsatisfying: what Pope gives us of his own, is energetic, irresistible, and divine. The incompatibility of philosophical and poetical genius is, I think, no unaccountable thing. Poetry exhibits the general qualities of a species; philosophy the particular qualities of individuals. *This* forms its conclusions from a painful and minute examination of single instances: *that* decides instantaneously, either from its own instinctive sagacity, or from a singular and unaccountable penetration, which at one glance sees all the instances which the philosopher must leisurely and progressively scrutinize, one by one. This persuades you gradually, and by detail; the other overpowers you in an instant by a single effort. Observe the effect of argumentation in poetry; we have too many instances of it in Milton: it transforms the noblest thoughts into drawling inferences, and the most beautiful language into prose: it checks the tide of passion, by giving the mind a different employment in the comparison of ideas. A little philosophical acquaintance with the most beautiful parts of nature, both in the material and immaterial system, is of use to a poet, and gives grace and solidity to poetry; as may be seen in the "Georgics," the "Seasons," and the "Pleasures of Imagination:" but this acquaintance, if it is any thing more than superficial, will do a poet rather harm than good; and will give his mind that turn for minute observation which enfeebles the fancy by restraining it, and counteracts the native energy of judgment, by rendering it fearful and suspicious.

LETTER VI.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 17th January, 1768.

I HAVE been intending, for these several weeks, to write to you, though it were only to assure you of the continuance of my esteem and attachment. This place, you know, furnishes little amusement, either political or literary; and at this season it is rather more barren than usual.

I have, for a time, laid aside my favourite studies, that I might have leisure to prosecute a philosophical inquiry, less amusing indeed than poetry and criticism, but not less important. The extraordinary success of the sceptical philosophy has long filled me with regret. I wish I could undeceive mankind in regard to this matter: perhaps this wish is vain; but it can do no harm to make the trial. The point I am now labouring to prove, is the universality and immutability of moral sentiment, a point which has been brought into dispute, both by the friends and by the enemies of virtue. In an age less licentious in its principles, it would not, perhaps, be necessary to insist much on this point. At present it is very necessary. Philosophers have ascribed all religion to human policy. Nobody knows how soon they may ascribe all morality to the same origin; and then the foundations of human society, as well as of human happiness, will be effectually undermined. To accomplish this end, Hobbes, Hume, Mandeville, and even Locke, have laboured; and I am sorry to say, from my knowledge of mankind, that their labour has not been altogether

in vain. Not that the works of these philosophers are generally read, or even understood by the few who read them. It is not the mode, now-a-days, for a man to think for himself; but they greedily adopt the conclusions, without any concern about the arguments or principles whence they proceed; and they justify their own credulity by general declamation upon the transcendent merit of their favourite authors, and the universal deference that is paid to their genius and learning. If I can prove those authors guilty of gross misrepresentations of matters of fact, unacquainted with the human heart, ignorant even of their own principles, the dupes of verbal ambiguities, and the votaries of frivolous though dangerous philosophy, I shall do some little service to the cause of truth; and all this I will undertake to prove, in many instances of high importance.

You have, no doubt, seen Dr. Blacklock's new book.* I was very much surprised to see my name prefixed to the dedication, as he never had given me the least intimation of such a design. His friendship does me great honour. I should be sorry, if, in this instance, it has got the better of his prudence; and I have some reason to fear, that my name will be no recommendation to the work, at least in this place, where, however, the book is very well spoken of, by some who have read it. I should like to know how it takes at Edinburgh.

LETTER VII.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 4th May, 1770.

NOTHING, I think, is stirring in the literary world. All ranks are run mad with politics; and I know not whether there was any period at which it was more unseasonable to publish new books. I do not mean, that the nation has no need of instruction; I mean only, that it has neither leisure nor inclination to listen to any.

I am a very great admirer of Armstrong's poem on "Health;" and therefore, as soon as I heard that the same author had published two volumes of "Miscellanies," I sent a commission for them with great expectations: but I am miserably disappointed. I know not what is the matter with Armstrong; but he seems to have conceived a rooted aversion at the whole human race, except a few friends, who, it seems, are dead. He sets the public opinion at defiance; a piece of boldness which neither Virgil nor Horace were ever so shameless as to acknowledge. It is very true, that living authors are often hardly dealt with by their contemporaries; witness Milton, Collins the poet, and many others: but I believe it is equally true, that no good piece was ever published, which did not sooner or later, obtain the public approbation. How is it possible it should be otherwise? People read for amusement. If a book be capable of yielding amusement, it will naturally be read; for no man is an enemy to what gives him pleasure. Some books, indeed, being calculated for the intellects of a few, can please only a few; yet if they produce this effect, they answer all the end the authors intended; and if those few be men of any note, which is generally the case, the herd of mankind will very willingly fall in with their judgment, and consent to admire what they do not understand. I question whether there are now in Europe two thousand, or even one

* "Paraclesis, or Consolations."

thousand persons, who understand a word of Newton's "Principia;" yet there are in Europe many millions who extol Newton as a very great philosopher. Those are but a small number who have any sense of the beauties of Milton; yet every body admires Milton, because it is the fashion. Of all the English poets of this age, Mr. Gray is most admired, and, I think, with justice; yet there are, comparatively speaking, but a few who know any thing of his, but his "Church-yard Elegy," which is by no means the best of his works. I do not think that Dr. Armstrong has any cause to complain of the public: his "Art of Health" is not indeed a popular poem, but it is very much liked, and has often been printed. It will make him known and esteemed by posterity; and I presume he will be the more esteemed, if all his other works perish with him. In his "Sketches," indeed, are many sensible, and some striking remarks; but they breathe such a rancorous and contemptuous spirit, and abound so much in odious vulgarisms and colloquial execrations, that in reading we are as often disgusted as pleased. I know not what to say of his "Universal Almanack:" it seems to me an attempt at humour; but such humour is either too high or too low for my comprehension. The plan of his tragedy, called the "Forced Marriage," is both obscure and improbable; yet there are good strokes in it, particularly in the last scene.

LETTER VIII.

Dr. Beattie to Dr. Blacklock.

Aberdeen, 27th May, 1770.

I CANNOT express how much I think myself indebted to your friendship, in entering so warmly into all my concerns, and in making out so readily, and at such length, the two critical articles. The shortest one was sent back, in course of post, to Mr. Kincaid,* from whom you would learn the reasons that induced me to make some alterations in the analysis you had there made of my book. The other paper I return in this packet. I have made a remark or two at the end, but no alterations. Indeed, how could I? you understand my philosophy as perfectly as I do; you express it much better, and you embellish it with a great many of your own sentiments, which, though new to me, are exceedingly apposite to my subject, and set some parts of it in a fairer light than I have been able to do in my book. I need not tell you how happy I am in the thought, that this work of mine has your approbation; for I know you too well to impute to mere civility the many handsome things you have said in praise of it. I know you approve it, because I know you incapable to say one thing and think another; and I do assure you, I would not forego your approbation to avoid the censure of fifty Mr. Humes. What do I say? Mr. Hume's censure I am so far from being ashamed of, that I think it does me honour. It is, next to his conversion (which I have no reason to look for), the most desirable thing I have to expect from that quarter. I have heard, from very good authority, that he speaks of me and my book with very great bitterness (I own, I thought he would rather have affected to treat both with contempt); and that he says I have not used him like a gentleman. He is quite right to set the matter upon that footing. It is an odious charge; it is an objection easily remembered, and, for that rea-

* The publisher.

son, will be often repeated by his admirers; and it has this farther advantage, that being (in the present case) perfectly unintelligible, it cannot possibly be answered. The truth is, I, as a rational, moral, and immortal being, and something of a philosopher, treated him as a rational, moral, and immortal being, a sceptic, and an atheistical writer. My design was, not to make a book full of fashionable phrases and polite expressions, but to undeceive the public in regard to the merits of the sceptical philosophy, and the pretensions of its abettors. To say that I ought not to have done this with plainness and spirit, is to say, in other words, that I ought either to have held my peace, or to have been a knave. In this case, I might, perhaps, have treated Mr. Hume as a gentleman; but I should not have treated society, and my own conscience, as became a man and a Christian. I have all along foreseen, and still foresee, that I shall have many reproaches, and cavils, and sneers, to encounter on this occasion; but I am prepared to meet them. I am not ashamed of my cause; and, if I may believe those whose good opinion I value as one of the chief blessings of life, I need not be ashamed of my work. You are certainly right in your conjecture, that it will not have a quick sale. Notwithstanding all my endeavours to render it perspicuous and entertaining, it is still necessary for the person who reads it *to think a little;* a task to which every reader will not submit. My subject too is unpopular, and my principles such as a man of the world would blush to acknowledge. How then can my book be popular? If it refund the expense of its publication, it will do as much as any person, who knows the present state of the literary world, can reasonably expect from it.

LETTER IX.

*Dr. Beattie to the Right Hon. the Dowager Lady Forbes.**

Aberdeen, 12th October, 1772.

I WISH the merit of the "Minstrel" were such as would justify all the kind things you have said of it. That it has merit, every body would think me a hypocrite if I were to deny: I am willing to believe that it has even considerable merit; and I acknowledge, with much gratitude, that it has obtained from the public a reception far more favourable than I expected. There are in it many passages, no doubt, which I admire more than others do; and, perhaps, there are some passages which others are more struck with than I am. In all poetry, this, I believe, is the case, more or less; but it is much more the case in poems of a sentimental cast, such as the "Minstrel" is, than in those of the narrative species. In epic and dramatic poesy there is a standard acknowledged, by which we may estimate the merit of the piece; whether the narrative be probable, and the characters well drawn and well preserved; whether all the events be conducive to the catastrophe; whether the action is unfolded in such a way as to command perpetual attention, and undiminished curiosity—these are points of which, in reading an epic poem, or tragedy, every reader possessed of good sense, or tolerable knowledge of the art, may hold himself to be a competent judge. Common life, and the general tenor of human affairs, is the standard to which these points may be referred, and according to which they may be estimated. But of sentimental poetry (if I may use the expression), there is no external

* Mrs. Dorothea Dale, widow of the right hon. William Lord Forbes.

standard. By it the heart of the reader must be touched at once, or it cannot be touched at all. Here the knowledge of critical rules, and a general acquaintance of human affairs, will not form a true critic; sensibility, and a lively imagination, are the qualities which alone constitute a true taste for sentimental poetry. Again, your ladyship must have observed, that some sentiments are common to all men; others peculiar to persons of a certain character. Of the former sort are those which Gray has so elegantly expressed in his "Church-yard Elegy," a poem which is universally understood and admired, not only for its poetical beauties, but also, and perhaps chiefly, for its expressing sentiments in which every man thinks himself interested, and which, at certain times, are familiar to all men. Now the sentiments expressed in the "Minstrel," being not common to all men, but peculiar to persons of a certain cast, cannot possibly be interesting, because the generality of readers will not understand nor feel them so thoroughly as to think them natural. That a boy should take pleasure in darkness or a storm, in the noise of thunder, or the glare of lightning; should be more gratified with listening to music at a distance, than with mixing in the merriment occasioned by it; should like better to see every bird and beast happy and free, than to exert his ingenuity in destroying or ensnaring them—these, and such like sentiments, which, I think, would be natural to persons of a certain cast, will, I know, be condemned as unnatural by others, who have never felt them in themselves, nor observed them in the generality of mankind. Of all this I was sufficiently aware before I published the "Minstrel," and, therefore, never expected that it would be a popular poem. Perhaps, too, the structure of the verse (which, though agreeable to some, is not to all), and the scarcity of incidents, may contribute to make it less relished than it would have been, if the plan had been different in these particulars.

From the questions your ladyship is pleased to propose, in the conclusion of your letter, as well as from some things I have had the honour to hear you advance in conversation, I find you are willing to suppose, that, in Edwin, I have given only a picture of myself, as I was in my younger days. I confess the supposition is not groundless. I have made him take pleasure in the scenes in which I took pleasure, and entertain sentiments similar to those of which, even in my early youth, I had repeated experience. The scenery of a mountainous country, the ocean, the sky, thoughtfulness and retirement, and sometimes melancholy objects and ideas, had charms in my eyes, even when I was a schoolboy; and at a time when I was so far from being able to express, that I did not understand, my own feelings, or perceive the tendency of such pursuits and amusements; and as to poetry and music, before I was ten years old I could play a little on the violin, and was as much master of Homer and Virgil, as Pope's and Dryden's translations could make me. But I am ashamed to write so much on a subject so trifling as myself and my own works. Believe me, madam, nothing but your ladyship's commands could have induced me to do it.

LETTER X.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 13th February, 1773.

I AM deeply sensible of your goodness, in communicating to me, in so tender and soothing a manner, the news of a misfortune, which is in-

deed one of the severest I have ever felt. For these two months past my spirits have been unusually depressed, so that I am but ill prepared for so terrible a stroke. Of the loss which society and which his family have received; of the incomparable loss which I sustain, by the death of this excellent person, I can say nothing; my heart is too full, and I have not yet recovered myself so far as to think or speak coherently, on this or any other subject.

You justly observe, that his friends may derive no small consolation from the circumstance of his death having been without pain,* and from the well-grounded hope we may entertain, of his having made a happy change. But I find I cannot proceed: I thought I should have been able to give you some of my thoughts on this occasion; but the subject overpowers me. Write to me as soon, and as fully as you can, of the situation of his family, and whatever you may think I would wish to know. I shall endeavour to follow your kind advice, and to reconcile myself to this great affliction as much as I am able. My reason, I trust, is fully reconciled: I am thoroughly convinced that every dispensation of Providence is wise and good; and that, by making a proper improvement of the evils of this life, we may convert them all into blessings. It becomes us, therefore, to adore the Supreme Benefactor, when he takes away, as well as when he gives; for He is wise and beneficent in both.

LETTER XI.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

Aberdeen, 3d May, 1773.

I HAVE just now finished the business of a melancholy winter. When I wrote to you last, which was in January, my health and spirits were in a very low state. In this condition, the unexpected death of the best of men, and of friends, came upon me with a weight, which at any time I should have thought almost insupportable, but which, at that time, was afflicting to a degree which human abilities alone could never have endured. But Providence, ever beneficent and gracious, has supported me under this heavy dispensation; and I hope I shall in time be enabled to review it, even with that cheerful submission which becomes a Christian and which none but a Christian can entertain. I have a thousand things to say on this most affecting subject; but for your sake, madam, and for my own, I shall not, at present, enter upon them. Nobody can be more sensible than you are, of the irreparable loss which, not only his own family and friends, but which society in general sustains by the loss of this excellent person: and I need not tell you, for of this too I know you are sensible, that of all his friends (his own family excepted), none has so much cause of sorrow, on this occasion, as I. I should never have done, if I were to enter into the particulars of his kindness to me. For these many years past, I have had the happiness to be of his intimate acquaintance. He took part in all my concerns; and as I concealed nothing from him, he knew my heart and my character as well as I myself did; only the partiality of his friendship made him think more favourably of me than I deserved. In all my difficulties, I applied to him for advice and comfort, both which he had the art of communicating in such a way as never failed to compose and strengthen my mind. His zeal in promoting my interest and reputation is very generally known. In a word (for I must endeavour to quit a

* Dr. Gregory was found dead in bed, probably from an attack of the gout, to which he was subject.

subject which will long be oppressive to my heart), my inward quiet, and external prosperity, were objects of his particular and unwearied care; and he never missed any opportunity of promoting both, to the utmost of his power. I wrote to his son soon after the fatal event; and have had the comfort to hear from several hands, that he, and his sisters, and the whole family, behave with a propriety that charms every body. In continuing his father's lectures he acquits himself to universal satisfaction.

LETTER XII.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

Aberdeen, 15th October, 1773.

I PURPOSELY delayed for a few days to answer your letter, that I might be at leisure to think seriously before I should venture to give my opinion, in regard to the important matter, about which you did me the honour to consult me. A religious education is indeed the greatest of all earthly blessings to a young man especially in these days, when one is in such danger of receiving impressions of a contrary tendency. I hope, and earnestly wish, that this, and every other blessing, may be the lot of your nephew, who seems to be accomplished and promising far beyond his years.

I must confess, I am strongly prepossessed in favour of that mode of education that takes place in the English universities. I am well aware at the same time, that in those seminaries, there are, to some young men, many more temptations to idleness and dissipation, than in our colleges in Scotland; but there are also, if I mistake not, better opportunities of study to a studious young man, and the advantages of a more respectable and more polite society, to such as are discreet and sober. The most valuable parts of human literature, I mean the Greek and Latin classics, are not so completely taught in Scotland as in England; and I fear it is no advantage, I have sometimes known it a misfortune, to those young men of distinction that come to study with us, that they find too easy and too favourable an admittance to balls, assemblies, and other diversions of a like kind, where the fashion not only permits, but requires that a particular attention be paid to the younger part of the female world. A youth of fortune, with the English language, and English address, soon becomes an object of consideration to a raw girl; and equally so, perhaps, though not altogether on the same account, to her parents. Our long vacations, too, in the colleges in Scotland, though a convenience to the native student (who commonly spends those intervals at home with his parents), are often dangerous to the students from England; who being then set free from the restraints of academical discipline, and at a distance from their parents or guardians, are too apt to forget, that it was for the purpose of study, not of amusement, they were sent into this country.

All, or most of these inconveniences, may be avoided at an English university, provided a youth have a discreet tutor, and be himself of a sober and studious disposition.—There, classical erudition receives all the attentions and honours it can claim; and there the French philosophy, of course, is seldom held in very high estimation; there, at present, a regard to religion is fashionable; there, the recluseness of a college-life, the wholesome severities of academical discipline, the authority of the university, and several other circumstances I could mention, prove very powerful restraints to such of the youth as have any sense of true

honour, or any regard to their real interest.

We, in Scotland, boast of our professors, that they give regular lectures in all the sciences, which the students are obliged to attend; a part of literary economy which is but little attended to in the universities of England. But I will venture to affirm, from experience, that if a professor does no more than deliver a set of lectures, his young audience will be little the wiser for having attended him. The most profitable part of my time is that which I employ in examinations, or in Socratical dialogue with my pupils, or in commenting upon ancient authors, all which may be done by a tutor in a private apartment, as well as by a professor in a public school. Lectures indeed I do, and must give; in order to add solemnity to the truths I would inculcate; and partly, too, in compliance with the fashion, and for the sake of my own character (for this, though not the most difficult part of our business, is that which shows the speaker to most advantage); but I have always found the other methods, particularly the Socratic form of dialogue, much more effectual in fixing the attention, and improving the faculties of the student.

I will not, madam, detain you longer with this comparison: it is my duty to give you my real sentiments, and you will be able to gather them from these imperfect hints. If it is determined that your nephew shall be sent to an university in Scotland, he may, I believe, have as good a chance for improvement at Edinburgh or Glasgow, as at any other; if the law is to form any part of his studies, he ought by all means to go to one or other of these places; as we have no law professors in any other part of this kingdom, except one in King's college, Aberdeen, whose office has been a sinecure for several generations. Whether he should make choice of Edinburgh or of Glasgow, I am at a loss to say: I was formerly well enough acquainted with the professors of both those societies, but, *tempora mutantur.** Dr. Reid is a very learned, ingenious, and worthy man; so is Dr. Blair: they are both clergymen; so that, I am confident, your nephew might lodge safely and profitably with either.—Whether they would choose to accept of the office of tutor to any young gentleman, they themselves only can determine; some professors would decline it, on account of the laboriousness of their office: it is partly on this account, but chiefly on account of my health, that I have been obliged to decline every offer of this sort.

LETTER XIII.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

Aberdeen, 3d May, 1774.

I AM greatly obliged and honoured by what the hierarchy have done, and are doing for me. Of Dr. Law's attack I shall take no further notice.

I received a letter, two days ago, from Dr. Hurd.† It is a very kind letter, and much in praise of the "Minstrel." Lord Chesterfield's Letters, he says, are well calculated for the purpose of teaching "manners without morals" to our young people of quality. This opinion I had indeed begun to form concerning them, from some short extracts in the newspapers. In one of these extracts I was greatly surprised to see such a pompous encomium on Bolingbroke's *Patriot King;* which has always appeared to me a mere *vox et præterea nihil.*‡ Plato was one of

* Times are changed.
† Afterwards lord bishop of Worcester.
‡ Nothing but empty sound.

the first who introduced the fashion of giving us fine words instead of good sense; in this, as in his other faults, he has been successfully imitated by Shaftesbury; but I know not whether he, or any other author has ever put together so many words, with so little meaning, as Bolingbroke, in his papers on patriotism.

Lord Monboddo's second volume has been published some time. It is, I think, much better than the first, and contains much learning, and not a little ingenuity: but can never be very interesting, except to those who aim at a grammatical and critical knowledge of the Greek tongue.—Lord Kaimes's "Sketches" I have seen. They are not much different from what I expected. A man who reads thirty years, with a view to collect facts in support of two or three whimsical theories, may, no doubt, collect a great number of facts, and make a very large book. The world will wonder when they hear of a modern philosopher, who seriously denies the existence of such a principle as universal benevolence; a point of which no good man can entertain a doubt for a single moment.

I am sorry for poor Goldsmith.—There were some things in his temper which I did not like: but I liked many things in his genius: and I was sorry to find, last summer, that he looked upon me as a person who seemed to stand between him and his interest. However, when next we meet, all this will be forgotten; and the jealousy of authors, which Dr. Gregory used to say was next in rancour to that of physicians, will be no more.

I am glad that you are pleased with the additional stanzas of the second canto of the "Minstrel;" but I fear you are too indulgent. How it will be relished by the public, I cannot even guess. I know all its faults; but I cannot remedy them, for they are faults in the first concoction; they result from the imperfection of the plan. I am much obliged to you, madam, for advising that two copies should be presented to their majesties; which, Dilly writes me word, has been done by my good friend Dr. Majendie. This honour I meant to have solicited when the second edition came out, which will be soon. My reason for this delay was, that the first edition having been put to the press, and some sheets of it printed off before I knew, I had it not in my power to order any copies on fine paper. But it is better as it is: the paper of the copy I have is not at all amiss.

My "Essay on Laughter" advances but slowly. I have all my materials at hand; but my health obliges me to labour very moderately in reducing them into order. I am very unwilling to relinquish the hope of receiving from you, madam, some assistance in completing my volume. I beg you will think of it. Perhaps you may find more leisure when you come into the north.

Mr. Mason has never answered the letter I wrote to him, concerning the subscription. I guessed from the tenor of his letters, that he is (as you say) out of humour with the world. Mr. Dilly writes me word, that he says he is tempted to throw his *Life of Mr. Gray* (which is now finished, or nearly so) into the fire, so much is he dissatisfied with the late decision on literary property. By the way, I heartily wish the legislature may, by a new law, set this matter on a proper footing. Literature must suffer, if this decision remains unobviated.

LETTER XIV.

The Rev. Dr. Porteus to Dr. Beattie.

Hunton, near Maidstone, Kent,
July 24, 1774.

I AM desired, by one of the epis-

copal bench,* whose name I am not yet at liberty to mention, to ask you, whether you have any objections to taking orders in the church of England. If you have not, there is a living now vacant in his gift, worth near five hundred pounds a-year, which will be at your service.

Be pleased to send me your answer to this, as soon as possible, and direct it to me at Peterborough, in Northamptonshire, where I shall probably be, before your letter can reach me. I feel myself happy in being the instrument of communicating to you so honourable and advantageous a proof of that esteem, which your literary labours have secured to you amongst all ranks of people.

LETTER XV.

Dr. Beattie to the Rev. Dr. Porteus.

Peterhead, Aug. 4, 1774.

I HAVE made many efforts to express, in something like adequate language, my grateful sense of the honour done me by the right reverend prelate, who makes the offer conveyed to me in your most friendly letter of the 24th July. But every new effort serves only to convince me, more and more, how unequal I am to the task.

When I consider the extraordinary reception which my weak endeavours in the cause of truth have met with, and compare the greatness of my success with the insignificance of my merit; what reasons have I not to be thankful and humble! to be ashamed that I have done so little public service, and to regret that so little *is in my power!* to rouse every power of my nature to purposes of benevolent tendency, in order to justify, by my intentions at least, the unexampled generosity of my benefactors!

* Dr. Thomas, bishop of Winchester.

My religious opinions would, no doubt, if I were to declare them, sufficiently account for, and vindicate, my becoming a member of the Church of England: and I flatter myself, that my studies, way of life, and habits of thinking, have always been such as would not disqualify me for an ecclesiastical profession. If I were to become a clergyman, the Church of England would certainly be my choice; as I think, that, in regard to church government, and church service, it has many great and peculiar advantages. And I am so far from having any natural disinclination to holy orders, that I have several times, at different periods of my life, been disposed to enter into them, and have directed my studies accordingly.—Various accidents, however, prevented me; some of them pretty remarkable, and such as I think I might, without presumption, ascribe to a particular interposition of Providence.

The offer now made me is great and generous beyond all expectation. I am well aware of all the advantages and honours that would attend my accepting, and yet I find myself obliged, in conscience, to decline it; as I lately did another of the same kind (though not so considerable) that was made me, on the part of another English gentleman. The reasons which did then, and do now, determine me, I beg leave, sir, briefly to lay before you.

I wrote the "Essay on Truth," with the certain prospect of raising many enemies, with very faint hopes of attracting the public attention, and without any views of advancing my fortune. I published it, however, because I thought it might probably do a little good, by bringing to nought, or at least lessening the reputation of, that wretched system of sceptical philosophy, which had made a most alarming progress, and done incredible mischief to this country. My

enemies have been at great pains to represent my views, in that publication, as very different; and that my principal or only motive was to make a book, and, if possible, to raise myself higher in the world. So that, if I were now to accept preferment in the church, I should be apprehensive that I might strengthen the hands of the gainsayer, and give the world some ground to believe, that my love of truth was not quite so ardent, or so pure as I had pretended.

Besides, might it not have the appearance of levity and insincerity, and, by some, be construed into a want of principle, if I were at these years (for I am now thirty-eight) to make such an important change in my way of life, and to quit, with no other *apparent* motive than that of bettering my circumstances, that church of which I have hitherto been a member? If my book has any tendency to do good, as I flatter myself it has, I would not, for the wealth of the Indies, do any thing to counteract that tendency; and I am afraid, that tendency might in some measure be counteracted (at least in this country), if I were to give the adversary the least ground to charge me with inconsistency. It is true, that the force of my reasonings cannot be *really* affected by my character; truth is truth, whoever be the speaker: but even truth itself becomes less respectable, when spoken, or supposed to be spoken, by insincere lips.

It has also been hinted to me, by several persons of very sound judgment, that what I have written, or may hereafter write, in favour of religion, has a chance of being more attended to, if I continue a layman, than if I were to become a clergyman. Nor am I without apprehensions (though some of my friends think them ill-founded), that, from entering so late in life, and from so remote a province, into the Church of England, some degree of ungracefulness, particularly in pronunciation, might adhere to my performances in public, sufficient to render them less pleasing, and consequently less useful.

Most of these reasons were repeatedly urged upon me, during my stay in England, last summer; and I freely own, that, the more I consider them, the more weight they seem to have. And from the peculiar manner in which the king has been graciously pleased to distinguish me, and from other circumstances, I have some ground to presume, that it is his majesty's pleasure that I should continue where I am, and employ my leisure hours in prosecuting the studies I have begun. This I can find time to do more effectually in Scotland than in England, and in Aberdeen than in Edinburgh; which, by the bye, was one of my chief reasons for declining the Edinburgh professorship. The business of my professorship here is indeed toilsome; but I have, by fourteen years' practice, made myself so much master of it, that it now requires little mental labour; and our long summer vacation, of seven months, leaves me at my own disposal, for the greatest and best part of the year: a situation favourable to literary projects, and now become necessary to my health.

Soon after my return home, in autumn last, I had occasion to write to the archbishop of York on this subject. I specified my reasons for giving up all thoughts of church preferment; and his grace was pleased to approve of them; nay, he condescended so far as to say, they did me honour. I told his grace, moreover, that I had already given a great deal of trouble to my noble and generous patrons in England, and could not think of being any longer a burden to them, now that his majesty had so graciously and so generously made for me a provision equal to my wishes,

and such as puts it in my power to obtain, in Scotland, every convenience of life to which I have any title, or any inclination to aspire.

I must, therefore, make it my request to you, that you would present my humble respects, and most thankful acknowledgments, to the eminent person at whose desire you wrote your last letter (whose name I hope you will not be under the necessity of concealing from me), and assure him, that, though I have taken the liberty to decline his generous offer, I shall, to the last hour of my life, preserve a most grateful remembrance of the honour he has condescended to confer upon me; and to prove myself not altogether unworthy of his goodness, shall employ that health and leisure which Providence may hereafter afford me, in opposing infidelity, heresy, and error, and in promoting sound literature and Christian truth, to the utmost of my power.

LETTER XVI.

Mrs. Montagu to Dr. Beattie.

Tunbridge Wells, Sept. 3, 1775.

It was not without trembling and horror I read the account of your overturn, and the dangerous circumstances with which it was attended. The traveller who is obliged to traverse a pathless wilderness or in a frail boat to cross the angry ocean, devoutly prays to the Omnipotent to assist and preserve him; the occasion awakens his fears, and animates his devotion: but it is only from experience and reflection we are taught to consider every day, which passes in safety and closes in peace, as a mercy. If I had known, when you had set out from Denton, how near to a precipice you would have been thrown, I should more earnestly have prayed for your preservation through the journey: but the incident at once makes me sensible, that our safety depends not on the road, but the hand that upholds and guides us.

I left Denton the first day of August. On the second by noon, I reached the episcopal palace of our friend, the archbishop of York,* at Bishop's Thorpe. I had before visited him at his family seat at Brodsworth. The man, who has a charater of his own, is little changed by varying his situation: I can only say, that at his family seat I found him the most of a prelate of any gentleman, and, at his palace, the most of a gentleman I had ever seen. Native dignity is the best ground-work of assumed and special dignity. We talked a great deal of you; the subject was copious and pleasant. We considered you, as a poet, with admiration; as a philosopher, with respect; as a Christian, with veneration; and as a friend, with affection. His grace's health is not quite what we could wish. I could indulge myself in no longer than one day's delay at Bishop's Thorpe. I then made the best of my way to London, and, after a very short stay there, came to Tunbridge. I have the happiness of having Mrs. Carter in my house, and Mrs. Vesey is not at a quarter of a mile's distance: thus, though I live secluded from the general world, I have the society of those I love best. I propose to stay here about three weeks, then I return to London, to prepare for my expedition to the south of France. I have written to a gentleman at Montauban to endeavour to get for me a large house in any part of that town. I am assured that the climate of Montauban is very delightful; the air is dry, but not piercing as at Montpelier. There is but little society; but there are some provincial *noblesse*, amongst whom

* Hon. Dr. Hay Drummond, at that time archbishop of York.

I hope to find some who are more in the *ton* of Louis XIV.'s court, than I should at Versailles. It is long before the polished manners of a court arrive at the distant regions of a great country; but when there, they acquire a permanent establishment. At Paris, the minister, or the favourite of the day, is taken for the model, and there is a perpetual change of manners. I think with some pleasures of escaping the gloom of our winter and the bustle of London, and passing my time in the blessings of cheerful tranquillity and soft sunshine: at the same time, there is something painful in removing so far from one's dearest friends.

I wish much to see the verses on the pretty incident of the dove's alighting on Shakspeare's statue.—Of whatever nature and disposition the animal had been, he might have been presented as a symbol of Shakspeare. The gravity and deep thought of the bird of wisdom; the sublime flight of the eagle to the starry regions and the throne of Jove; the pensive song of the nightingale, when she shuns the noise of folly, and soothes the midnight visionary; the pert jackdaw, that faithfully repeats the chitchat of the market or the shop; the sky lark, that, soaring, seems to sing to the denizens of the air, and set her music to the tone of beings of another region—would all assort with the genius of universal Shakspeare.

LETTER XVII.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

Aberdeen, Sept. 17, 1775.

YOUR reflections on the little disaster, with which our journey concluded, exactly coincide with mine. I agree with Hawkesworth, that the peril and the deliverance are equally providential; and I wonder he did not see, that both the one and the other may be productive of the very best effects. These little accidents and trials are necessary to put us in mind of that superintending goodness, to which we are indebted for every breath we draw, and of which, in the hour of tranquillity, many of us are too apt to be forgetful. But you, madam, forget nothing which a Christian ought to remember; and therefore I hope and pray that Providence may defend you from every alarm. By the way, there are several things, besides that preface to which I just now referred, in the writings of Hawkesworth, that show an unaccountable perplexity of mind in regard to some of the principles of natural religion. I observed, in his conversation, that he took a pleasure in ruminating upon riddles, and puzzling questions and calculations; and he seems to have carried something of the same temper into his moral and theological researches. His "Almoran and Hamet" is a strange confused narrative, and leaves upon the mind of the reader some disagreeable impressions in regard to the ways of providence; and from the theory of *pity*, which he has given us somewhere in the "Adventurer," one would suspect that he was no enemy to the philosophy of Hobbes. However, I am disposed to impute all this rather to a vague way of thinking, than to any perversity of heart or understanding. Only I wish, that in his last work he had been more ambitious to tell the plain truth, than to deliver to the world a wonderful story. I confess, that from the first I was inclined to consider his vile portrait of the manners of Otaheite as in part fictitious; and I am now assured, upon the very best authority, that Dr. Solander disavows some of those narrations, or at least declares them to be grossly misrepresented. There is, in almost all the late books of travels I have seen, a disposition

on the part of the author to recommend licentious theories. I would not object to the truth of any fact, that is warranted by the testimony of competent witnesses. But how few of our travellers are competent judges of the facts they relate! How few of them know any thing accurately of the language of those nations, whose laws, religion, and moral sentiments, they pretend to describe! And how few of them are free from that inordinate love of the marvellous, which stimulates equally the vanity of the writer, and the curiosity of the reader! Suppose a Japanese crew to arrive in England, take in wood and water, exchange a few commodities; and, after a stay of three months, to set sail for their own country, and there set forth a history of the English government, religion, and manners: it is, I think, highly probable, that, for one truth, they would deliver a score of falsehoods. But Europeans, it will be said, have more sagacity, and know more of mankind. Be it so: but this advantage is not without inconveniences, sufficient perhaps to counterbalance it. When a European arrives in any remote part of the globe, the natives, if they know any thing of his country, will be apt to form no favourable opinion of his intentions, with regard to their liberties; if they know nothing of him, they will yet keep aloof, on account of his strange language, complexion, and accoutrements. In either case he has little chance of understanding their laws, manners, and principles of action, except by a long residence in the country, which would not suit the views of one traveller in five thousand. He therefore picks up a few strange plants and animals, which he may do with little trouble or danger; and, at his return to Europe, is welcomed by the literati, as a philosophic traveller of most accurate observation, and unquestionable veracity. He describes, perhaps, with tolerable exactness, the soils, plants, and other irrational curiosities of the new country, which procures credit to what he has to say of the people; though his accuracy in describing the material phenomena is no proof of his capacity to explain the moral. One can easily dig to the root of a plant, but it is not so easy to penetrate the motive of an action; and till the motive of an action be known, we are no competent judges of its morality; and in many cases the motive of an action is not to be known without a most intimate knowledge of the language and manners of the agent. Our traveller then delivers a few facts of the moral kind, which perhaps he does not understand, and from them draws some inferences suitable to the taste of the times, or to a favourite hypothesis. He tells us of a Californian, who sold his bed in a morning, and came with tears in his eyes to beg it back at night; whence he very wisely infers, that the poor Californians are hardly one degree above the brutes in understanding, for that they have neither foresight nor memory sufficient to direct their conduct on the most common occasions of life. In a word, they are quite a different species of animal from the European; and it is a gross mistake to think, that all mankind are descended from the same first parents. But one needs not go so far as to California, in quest of men who sacrifice a future good to a present gratification. In the metropolis of Great Britain one may meet with many reputed Christians, who would act the same part, for the pleasure of carousing half a day in a gin-shop. Again, to illustrate the same important truth, that man is a beast, or very little better, we are told of another nation, on the banks of the Orellana, so wonderfully stupid, that they cannot reckon beyond the number three, but point

to the hair of their head whenever they would signify a greater number; as if four, and four thousand, were to them equally inconceivable. But, whence it comes to pass, that these people are capable of speech, or of reckoning at all, even so far as to three, is a difficulty of which our historian attempts not the solution. But, till he shall solve it, I must beg leave to tell him that the one half of his tale contradicts the other, as effectually as if he had told us of a people, who were so weak as to be incapable of bodily exertion, and yet that he had seen one of them lift a stone of a hundred weight.—I beg your pardon, madam, for running into this subject. The truth is, I was lately thinking to write upon it: but I shall not have leisure these many months.

Take no farther concern about your dwarf. The person, whom you honour with your notice, I shall always think it my duty to care for. I have let it be known in the town what you have done for him; which I hope will be a spur to the generosity of others. He has paid me but one visit as yet. His wants are few; and he seems to be modest as well as magnanimous. Both virtues certainly entitle him to consideration.

I have not yet seen the verses on Shakespeare and the dove. One thing I am certain of, which is, that they will contain nothing so much to the purpose, or so elegant, as what you have said on the occasion in prose. You justly remark, that any bird of character, from the eagle to the sky-lark, from the owl to the mock-bird, might symbolize with one or other of the attributes of that universal genius. But, do not you think that his dove-like qualities are among those on which he *now* reflects with peculiar complacency? And I think it could be shown, from many things in his writings, that he resembled the dove as much as the eagle. There are no surly fellows among his favourite characters: and he seems to excel himself in the delineation of a good-natured one. Witness his Brutus, who is indeed finished *con amore;* and who, in gentleness of nature, exceeds even the Brutus of the good-natured Plutarch, as this last exceeded, by many degrees (if we are to believe some creditable historians), the true original Brutus, who fell at Philippi. There are besides, in the writings of Shakespeare, innumerable passages, that bespeak a mind peculiarly attentive to the rights of humanity and to the feelings of animal nature. Lear, when his distress is at the highest, sympathizes with those, who, amidst the pinchings of want and nakedness, are exposed to the tempestuous elements. I need not put you in mind of the *poor sequestered stag* in "As you like it;" nor need I say more on a subject with which you are much better acquainted than I am.

LETTER XVIII.

Dr. Beattie to the Honourable Mr. Baron Gordon.

Aberdeen, 6th February, 1776.

I HAVE been very much employed in preparing some little things of mine for the press; otherwise I should sooner have acknowledged the favour of your most obliging letter.

The last time I read Virgil, I took it into my head, that the tenth and eleventh books of the Æneid were not so highly finished as the rest. Every body knows that the last six books are less perfect than the first six; and I fancied that some of the last six came nearer to perfection than others. I cannot now recollect my reasons for this conceit; but I pro-

pose to read the Æneid again, as soon as I have got rid of this publication; and I hope I shall then be in a condition to give something of a reasonable answer to any question you may do me the honour to propose in regard to that matter.

I do not mean that the tenth or eleventh books are at all imperfect; I only mean, that they fall short of Virgilian perfection. And many passages there are in both, which Virgil himself could not, in my opinion, have made better. Such are the story of Mezentius and Lausus, in the end of the tenth book; and that passage in the eleventh, where old Evander meets the dead body of his son. Mezentius is a character of Virgil's own contrivance, and it is extremely well drawn: an old tyrant, hated by his people on account of his impiety and cruelty, yet graced with one amiable virtue, which is sometimes found in very rugged minds, a tender affection for a most deserving son. Filial affection is one of those virtues which Virgil dwells upon with peculiar pleasure; he never omits any opportunity of bringing it in, and he always paints it in the most lovely colours. Æneas, Ascanius, Euryalus, Lausus, are all eminent for this virtue; and Turnus, when he asks his life, asks it only for the sake of his poor old father. Let a young man read the Æneid with taste and attention, and then be an undutiful child if he can. I think there is nothing very distinguishing in Camilla. Perhaps it is not easy to imagine more than one form of that character. The adventures of her early youth are, however, highly interesting and wildly romantic. The circumstance of her being, when an infant, thrown across a river, tied to a javelin, is so very singular, that I should suppose Virgil had found it in some history; and, if I mistake not, Plutarch has told such a story of king Pyrrhus. The battle of the horse, in the end of the eleventh book, is well conducted, considering that Virgil was there left to his shifts, and had not Homer to assist him. The speeches of Drances and Turnus are highly animated; and nothing could be better contrived to raise our idea of Æneas than the answer which Diomede gives to the ambassadors from the Italian army.

I ought to ask pardon for troubling you with these superficial remarks. But a desire to approve myself worthy of being honoured with your commands, has led me into a subject for which I am not at present prepared. When I have the pleasure to pay my respects to you at Cluny, which I hope will be early in the summer, I shall be glad to talk over these matters, and to correct my opinions by yours.

LETTER XIX.

Dr. Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon.

Aberdeen, 10th January, 1779.

MAJOR MERCER made me very happy with the news he brought from Gordon castle, particularly when he assured me that your grace was in perfect health. He told me too, that your solitude was at an end for some time; which I confess I was not sorry to hear. Seasons of recollection may be useful; but when one begins to find pleasure in sighing over Young's "Night Thoughts" in a corner, it is time to shut the book, and return to the company. I grant, that, while the mind is in a certain state, those gloomy ideas give exquisite delight; but their effect resembles that of intoxication upon the body; they may produce a temporary fit of feverish exultation, but qualms, and weakened nerves, and depression of spirits, are the consequence. I have great respect for Dr. Young,

both as a man and as a poet; I used to devour his "Night Thoughts" with a satisfaction not unlike that, which, in my younger years, I have found in walking alone in a church-yard, or in a wild mountain, by the light of the moon, at midnight. Such things may help to soften a rugged mind; and I believe I might have been the better for them. But your grace's heart is already "too feelingly alive to each fine impulse;" and, therefore, to you I would recommend gay thoughts, cheerful books, and sprightly company: I might have said *company* without any limitation, for wherever you are the company must be sprightly. Excuse this obtrusion of advice. We are all physicians who have arrived at forty; and as I have been studying the anatomy of the human mind these fifteen years and upwards, I think I ought to be something of a soul-doctor by this time.

When I first read Young, my heart was broken to think of the poor man's afflictions. Afterwards, I took it in my head, that where there was so much lamentation there could not be excessive suffering; and I could not help applying to him sometimes those lines of a song,

> "Believe me, the shepherd butfeigns
> He's wretched, to shew he has wit."

On talking with some of Dr. Young's particular friends in England, I have since found that my conjecture was right; for that while he was composing the "Night Thoughts" he was really as cheerful as any other man.

I well know the effect of what your grace expresses so properly of a cold *yes* returned to a warm sentiment. One meets with it often in company; and, in most companies, with nothing else. And yet it is perhaps no great loss, upon the whole, that one's enthusiasm does not always meet with an adequate return. A disappointment of this sort, now and then, may have upon the mind an effect something like that of the cold bath upon the body; it gives a temporary shock, but is followed by a very delightful glow as soon as one gets into a society of the right temperature. They resemble too in another respect. A cool companion may be disagreeable at first, but in a little time he becomes less so; and at our first plunge we are impatient to get out of the bath, but if we stay in it a minute or two, we lose the sense of its extreme coldness. Would not your grace think, from what I am saying, or rather preaching, that I was the most social man upon earth? And yet I am become almost an hermit: I have not made four visits these four months. Not that I am running away, or have any design to run away, from the world. It is, I rather think, the world that is running away from me.

No character was ever more fully or more concisely drawn than that of Major Mercer by your grace. I was certain you would like him the more, the longer you knew him. With more learning than any other man of my acquaintance, he has all the playfulness of a schoolboy; and unites the wit and the wisdom of Montesquieu, with the sensibility of Rousseau, and the generosity of Tom Jones. Your grace has likewise a very just idea of Mrs. Mercer. She is most amiable, and well accomplished; and in goodness and generosity of nature is not inferior even to the major himself. I met her the other day, and was happy to find her in better health than I think she has been for some years. This will be most welcome news to the major. Pray, does your grace think that he blames me for not writing to him this great while? The true reason is, that I have not had this great while any news to send him, but what I knew would give him pain;

and therefore I thought it better not to write, especially as we have been in daily expectation of seeing him here these several weeks. Will your grace take the trouble to tell him this? There is no man to whom I have been so much obliged; and, with one or two exceptions, there is no man or woman whom I love so well.

LETTER XX.

Dr. Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon.

Aberdeen, 5th July, 1779.

I NOW sit down to make good the threatening denounced in the conclusion of a letter which I had the honour to write to your grace about ten days ago. The request I am going to make I should preface with many apologies, if I did not know, that the personage to whom I address myself is too well acquainted with all the good emotions of the human heart to blame the warmth of a schoolboy attachment, and too generous to think the worse of me for wishing to assist an unfortunate friend.

Three weeks ago, as I was scribbling in my garret, a man entered, whom at first I did not know; but, on his desiring me to look him in the face, I soon recollected an old friend, whom I had not seen and scarcely heard of these twenty years. He and I lodged in the same house when we attended the school of Laurence-kirk, in the year 1747. I was then about ten years old, and he about fifteen. As he took a great liking to me, he had many opportunities of obliging me; having much more knowledge of the world, as well as more bodily strength, than I. He was, besides, an ingenious mechanic, and made for me many little things: and it must not be forgotten, that he first put a violin in my hands, and gave me the only lessons in music I ever received. Four years after this period I went to college, and he engaged in farming. But our acquaintance was renewed about five years after, when I remember he made me the confidant of a passion he had for the greatest beauty in that part of the country, whom he soon after married.

I was very glad to see my old friend so unexpectedly; and we talked over many old stories which, though interesting to us, would have given little pleasure to any body else. But my satisfaction was soon changed to regret, when, upon inquiring into the particulars of his fortune during these twenty years, I found he had been very unsuccessful. His farming projects had miscarried; and happening to give some offence to a young woman, who was called the house-keeper of a gentleman on whom he depended, she swore she would be revenged, to his ruin; and was as good as her word. He satisfied his creditors by giving them all his substance; and, retiring to a small house in Johnshaven,* made a shift to support his family by working as a joiner; a trade which, when a boy, he had picked up for his amusement. But a consumptive complaint overtook him; and, though he got the better of it, he has never since been able to do any thing that requires labour, and can now only make fiddles, and some such little matters, for which there is no great demand in the place where he lives. He told me he had come to Aberdeen on purpose to put me in mind of our old acquaintance, and see whether I could do any thing for him. I asked, in what respect he wished me to serve him. He would do any thing, he said, for his family, that was not dishonourable: and, on

* A small fishing town in the county of Kincardine.

pressing him a little further, I found that the height of his ambition was to be a tide-waiter, a land-waiter, or an officer of excise. I told him, it was particularly unlucky that I had not the least influence, or even acquaintance, with any one commissioner, either of the excise or customs: but, as I did not care to discourage him, I promised to think of his case, and to do what I could. I have since seen a clergyman, who knows my friend very well, and describes his condition as still more forlorn than he had represented it.

It is in behalf of this poor man, that I now venture to implore your grace's advice and assistance. I am well aware, that though his case is very interesting to me, there is nothing extraordinary in it, and that your grace must often be solicited for others in like circumstances. It is, therefore, with the utmost reluctance that I have taken this liberty. If your grace thinks that an application from me to Mr. Baron Gordon might be sufficient to procure one of the offices in question for my friend, I would not wish you to have any trouble; but if my application were enforced by yours, it would have a better chance to succeed. This, however, I do not request, if it is not so easy to your grace as to be almost a matter of indifference.

By the first convenient opportunity I hope to send your grace a sort of curiosity—four elegant Pastorals, by a Quaker; not one of our Quakers of Scotland, but a true English Quaker, who says *thee* and *thou*, and comes into a room, and sits down in company, without taking off his hat. For all this, he is a very worthy man, an elegant scholar, a cheerful companion, and a particular friend of mine. His name is John Scott, of Amwell, near Ware, Hertfordshire, where he lives in an elegant retirement (for his fortune is very good); and has dug in a chalk-hill, near his house, one of the most curious grottos I have ever seen. As it is only twenty miles from London, I would recommend it to your grace, when you are there, as worth going to visit. Your grace will be pleased with his Pastorals, not only on account of their morality and sweet versification, but also for their images and descriptions, which are a very exact picture of the groves, woods, waters, and windmills, of that part of England where he resides.

LETTER XXI.

Dr. Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon.

Whitehall, 16th May, 1781.

I HAVE seen most of the fashionable curiosities; but will not trouble your grace with any particular account of them. The exhibition of pictures at the Royal Academy is the best of the kind I have seen. The best pieces, in my opinion, are, Thais (with a torch in her hand); the Death of Dido; and a Boy supposed to be listening to a wonderful story; these three by sir Joshua Reynolds; a Shepherd Boy, by Gainsborough; some landscapes, by Barrett. Christ healing the Sick, by West, is a prodigious great work, and has in it great variety of expression; but there is a glare and a hardness in the colouring, which makes it look more like a picture than like nature. Gainsborough's picture of the King is the strongest likeness I have ever seen; his Queen too is very well: but he has not given them attitudes becoming their rank; the King has his hat in his hand, and the Queen looks as if she were going to curtsy in the beginning of a minuet. Others may think differently; I give my own opinion.

There is nothing at either playhouse that is in the least captivating;

nor, I think, one player, Mrs. Abingdon excepted, whom one would wish to see a second time. I was shocked at Leoni, in "Had I a heart for falsehood," &c. A man singing with a woman's voice sounds as unnatural to me as a woman singing with a man's. Either may do in a private company, where it is enough if people are diverted; but on a stage, where nature ought to be imitated, both are, in my opinion, intolerable.

Johnson's new "Lives" are published. He is, as your grace heard he would be, very severe on my poor friend Gray. His life of Pope is excellent; and in all his lives there is merit, as they contain a great variety of sound criticism and pleasing information. He has not done justice to lord Lyttelton. He has found means to pay me a very great compliment, for which I am much obliged to him, in speaking of Mr. Gray's journey into Scotland in 1765.

Copley's picture of Lord Chatham's Death is an exhibition of itself. It is a vast collection of portraits, some of them very like; but, excepting three or four of the personages present, few of this vast assembly seem to be much affected with the great event; which divests the picture of its unity, and will in the next age make it cease to be interesting.

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Jones (at the Age of Fourteen) to his Sister.

Dear sister,

When I received your letter I was very concerned to hear the death of your friend Mr. Reynolds, which I consider as a piece of affliction common to us both. For although my knowledge of his name or character is of no long date, and though I never had any personal acquaintance with him, yet (as you observe) we ought to regret the loss of every honourable man; and if I had the pleasure of your conversation I would certainly give you any consolatory advice that lay in my power, and make it my business to convince you what a real share I take in your chagrin. And yet, to reason philosophically, I cannot help thinking any grief upon a person's death very superfluous, and inconsistent with sense; for what is the cause of our sorrow? Is it because we hate the person deceased? that were to imply strange contradiction, to express our joy by the common signs of sorrow. If, on the other hand, we grieve for one who was dear to us, I should reply that we should, on the contrary, rejoice at his having left a state so perilous and uncertain as life is. The common strain is, "'Tis pity so virtuous a man should die:"—but I assert the contrary; and when I hear the death of a person of merit, I cannot help reflecting, how happy he must be who now takes the reward of his excellencies without the possibility of falling away from them, and losing the virtue which he professed; on whose character death has fixed a kind of seal, and placed him out of the reach of vice and infamy; for death only closes a man's reputation, and determines it as either good or bad. On the contrary, in life nothing is certain; whilst any one is liable to alteration, we may possibly be forced to retract our esteem for him, and some time or other he may appear to us as under a different light than what he does at present; for the life of no man can be pronounced either happy or miserable, virtuous or abandoned, before the conclusion of it. It was upon this reflection that Solon, being asked by Crœsus, a monarch of immense riches, Who was the happiest man? answered, After your death I shall be able to determine. Besides, though

a man should pursue a constant and determinate course of virtue, though he were to keep a regular symmetry and uniformity in his actions, and preserve the beauty of his reputation to the last, yet (while he lives) his very virtue may incur some evil imputation, and provoke a thousand murmurs of detraction; for, believe me, my dear sister, there is no instance of any virtue, or social excellence, which has not excited the envy of innumerable assailants, whose acrimony is raised barely by seeing others pleased, and by hearing commendation which another enjoys. It is not easy in this life for any man to escape censure; and infamy requires very little labour to assist its circulation. But there is a kind of sanction in the characters of the dead, which gives due force and reward to their merits, and defends them from the suggestions of calumny. But to return to the point: What reason is there to disturb yourself on this melancholy occasion? do but reflect that thousands die every moment of time; that even while we speak, some unhappy wretch or other is either pining with hunger or pinched with poverty, sometimes giving up his life to the point of the sword, torn with convulsive agonies, and undergoing many miseries which it were superfluous to mention. We should therefore compare our afflictions with those who are more miserable, and not with those who are more happy. I am ashamed to add more, lest I should seem to mistrust your prudence; but next week, when I understand your mind is more composed, I shall write you word how all things go here. I designed to write you this letter in French, but I thought I could express my thoughts with more energy in my own language.

I come now, after a long interval, to mention some more private circumstances. Pray give my duty to my mamma, and thank her for my shirts. They fit, in my opinion, very well, though Biddy says they are too little in the arms. You may expect a letter from me every day in the week till I come home; for Mrs. Biscoe has desired it, and has given me some franks. When you see her, you may tell her that her little boy sends his duty to her, and Mr. Biscoe his love to his sister, and desires to be remembered to miss Cleeve: he also sends his compliments to my mamma and you. Upon my word, I never thought our bleak air would have so good an effect upon him. His complexion is now ruddy, which before was sallow and pale, and he is indeed much grown: but I now speak of trifles, I mean in comparison of his learning; and indeed he takes that with wonderful acuteness; besides, his excessive high spirits increase mine, and give me comfort, since, after Parnell's departure, he is almost the only company I keep. As for news, the only article I know is, that Mrs. Par is dead and buried. Mr. and Mrs. Sumner are well: the latter thanks you for bringing the letter from your old acquaintance, and the former has made me an elegant present. I am now very much taken up with study; am to speak Antony's speech in Shakspeare's Julius Cæsar (which play I will read to you when I come to town), and am this week to make a declamation. I add no more than the sincere well wishes of your faithful friend, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

September 7, 1769.

THE necessary trouble of correcting the first printed sheets of my history, prevented me to-day from paying a proper respect to the memory of Shakspeare, by attending his

jubilee. But I was resolved to do all the honour in my power to as great a poet, and set out in the morning, in company with a friend, to visit a place where Milton spent some part of his life, and where, in all probability, he composed several of his earliest productions. It is a small village situated on a pleasant hill, about three miles from Oxford, and called Forest Hill, because it formerly lay contiguous to a forest, which has since been cut down. The poet chose this place of retirement after his first marriage, and he describes the beauties of his retreat in that fine passage of his L'Allegro—

Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, or hillocks green
* * * * * *
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land;
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe;
And ev'ry shepherd tells his tale,
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures:
Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees,
Bosom'd high in tufted trees.
* * * * * *
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks, &c.

It was neither the proper season of the year, nor time of the day, to hear all the rural sounds, and see all the objects mentioned in this description; but, by a pleasing concurrence of circumstances, we were saluted, on our approach to the village, with the music of the mower and his scythe; we saw the ploughman intent upon his labour, and the milkmaid returning from her country employment.

As we ascended the hill, the variety of beautiful objects, the agreeable stillness and natural simplicity of the whole scene, gave us the highest pleasure. We at length reached the spot whence Milton undoubtedly took most of his images; it is on the top of the hill, from which there is a most extensive prospect on all sides; the distant mountains, that seemed to support the clouds, the villages and turrets, partly shaded with trees of the finest verdure, and partly raised above the groves that surrounded them, the dark plains and meadows of a greyish colour, where the sheep were feeding at large; in short, the view of the streams and rivers, convinced us that there was not a single useless or idle word in the above-mentioned description, but that it was a most exact and lively representation of nature. Thus will this fine passage, which has always been admired for its elegance, receive an additional beauty from its exactness. After we had walked, with a kind of poetical enthusiasm, over this enchanted ground, we returned to the village.

The poet's house was close to the church; the greatest part of it has been pulled down, and what remains belongs to an adjacent farm. I am informed, that several papers in Milton's own hand were found by the gentleman who was last in possession of the estate. The tradition of his having lived there is current among the villagers: one of them showed us a ruinous wall, that made part of his chamber; and I was much pleased with another, who had forgotten the name of Milton, but recollected him by the title of The Poet.

It must not be omitted, that the groves near this village are famous for nightingales, which are so elegantly described in the Penseroso. Most of the cottage windows are overgrown with sweet-briars, vines, and honeysuckles; and that Milton's habitation had the same rustic ornament, we may conclude from his description of the lark bidding him good-morrow,

Thro' the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:

for it is evident that he meant a sort of honeysuckle by the eglantine, though that word is commonly used for the sweet-briar, which he could not mention twice in the same couplet.

If I ever pass a month or six weeks at Oxford in the summer, I shall be inclined to hire and repair this venerable mansion, and to make a festival for a circle of friends, in honour of Milton, the most perfect scholar, as well as the sublimest poet, that our country ever produced. Such an honour will be less splendid, but more sincere and respectful, than all the pomp and ceremony on the banks of the Avon. I have, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. Jones to N. B. Halhed.

Nice, March 1, 1770.

I RECEIVED your short letter with great pleasure, as it convinced me that you were not insensible of my esteem for you, and such as resemble you. I wrote immediately to my friends, as you desired, most earnestly requesting them to promote your views, as if my own interest were concerned; if they accede to my wishes in this respect they will oblige me and themselves too; for doubtless I shall be ready to make them every return that I can. I think, however, that I shall have it in my power to serve you more effectually after my return to England; and I beg you to believe, that no inclination or efforts on my part shall ever be wanting to promote your wishes.

My health is good; but I long for those enjoyments, of which I know not well how to bear the privation. When I first arrived here I was delighted with a variety of objects, rarely, if ever, seen in my own country, —olives, myrtles, vineyards, pomegranates, palms, aromatic plants, and a surprising variety of the sweetest flowers, blooming in the midst of winter. But the attraction of novelty has ceased; I am now satiated, and begin to feel somewhat of disgust. The windows of our inn are scarcely thirty paces from the sea, and, as Ovid beautifully says—

Tired, on the uniform expanse I gaze.

I have, therefore, no other resource than, with Cicero, to count the waves; or, with Archimedes and Archytas, to measure the sands. I cannot describe to you how weary I am of this place, nor my anxiety to be again at Oxford, where I might jest with you, or philosophize with Poore. If it be not inconvenient, I wish you would write to me often, for I long to know how you and our friends are: but write if you please in Latin, and with gaiety, for it grieves me to observe the uneasiness under which you appear to labour. Let me ever retain a place in your affection, as you do in mine; continue to cultivate polite literature; woo the muses; reverence philosophy; and give your days and nights to composition, with a due regard, however, to the preservation of your health.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

Nice, April 14, 1770.

IT is with great pleasure that I acquaint your ladyship that Mrs. Poyntz, lady Harriet, and her brother, are perfectly well; Mrs. Poyntz goes this morning to Villa Franca; I am to be her knight, and am just equipped to mount my Rosinante: mademoiselle Annette is to go upon lady Mary Somerset's ass; so we shall make a formidable procession. It is a delightful morning, and I hope Mrs. Poyntz will be pleased with her jaunt. We have had very bad weather, violent

rains, and storms of thunder in the night, a close sultry heat all day, and a very sharp cold every evening; but the spring seems now to be pretty well settled, and I fancy we shall have a continually clear sky, and a mild air, as long as we stay. We all promise ourselves great pleasure in our journey homewards; and we have great reason to believe it will be enchantingly pleasant. I have every day more and more reason to be pleased with the unfolding of my pupil's disposition: your ladyship will perhaps think these to be words of course, and what you might naturally expect from any other person in my situation; but, believe me, I say them upon no other motive than their truth; for if it were my nature to speak to any one what I do not think, I should at least speak truly to your ladyship, of whom I am, with the greatest truth, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

Paris, June 4, 1770.

YOUR ladyship will be surprised at receiving such a parcel of papers from me; but I am willing to make amends for not writing all last month. The truth is, I had nothing particular to say at that time; but on my arrival at Paris I found a letter from my friend Reviczki, with a very spirited ode composed by him upon the marriage of the archduchess. I dare say lord Spencer will like it, and I therefore take the liberty to enclose it for him. I have also sent with it the Baron's letter to me, which will serve as a comment upon many parts of the ode. You will have heard of the shocking accidents that happened here the night of the fireworks. Above one hundred and thirty people were killed; and several people of fashion were crushed to death in their carriages. We had the good fortune to arrive here two days after this dreadful catastrophe: which perhaps has saved some of us, if not from real danger, at least from the apprehension of it. We shall not be sorry to see England again, and hope to have that pleasure very soon. Soon after my return, I think of going to Oxford for a short time: but if lord Althorpe goes back to school this summer, as I sincerely hope he will, I shall not go to college till August; for I am convinced that a public school has already been, and will continue to be, of the highest advantage to him in every respect. While Mrs. Poyntz staid at Lyons, I made an excursion to Geneva, in hopes of seeing Voltaire, but was disappointed. I sent him a note with a few verses, implying that the muse of tragedy had left her ancient seat in Greece and Italy, and had fixed her abode on the borders of a lake, &c. He returned this answer: "The worst of French poets and philosophers is almost dying; age and sickness have brought him to his last day; he can converse with nobody, and entreats Mr. Jones to excuse and pity him. He presents him with his humble respects." But he was not so ill as he imagined; for he had been walking in his court, and went into his house, just as I came to it. The servants showed me somebody at a window, who they said was he; but I had scarce a glimpse of him. I am inclined to think that Voltaire begins to be rather serious, when he finds himself upon the brink of eternity; and that he refuses to see company, because he cannot display his former wit and sprightliness. I find my book* is published. I am not at all solicitous about its success; as I did not choose the subject myself, I am not answerable for the wild extravagance of the style, nor for the faults of the original; but if your ladyship takes the trouble to read the

* Translation of the Life of Nadir Shah.

dissertation at the end, you may perhaps find some new and pleasing images. The work has one advantage; it is certainly authentic. Lady Georgiana is so good as to inquire how Soliman goes on; pray tell her he is in great affliction, as he begins to suspect the innocence of Mustafa, who is just slain. To be serious; my tragedy is just finished, and I hope to show it to your ladyship in a short time. I am, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

Mr Jones to C. Reviczki.

March, 1771.

A PLAGUE on our men in office, who for six months have amused me with idle promises, which I see no prospect of their fulfilling, that they would forward my books and a letter to you! They say, that they have not yet had an opportunity; and that the apprehension of a Spanish war (which is now no more) furnishes them with incessant occupation.—I have however so much to say to you, that I can no longer delay writing: I wish, indeed, I could communicate it in person. On my late return to England, I found myself entangled, as it were, in a variety of important considerations. My friends, companions, relations, all attacked me with urgent solicitations to banish poetry and Oriental literature for a time, and apply myself to oratory and the study of the law; in other words, to become a barrister, and pursue the track of ambition. Their advice in truth was conformable to my own inclinations; for the only road to the highest stations in this country is that of the law; and I need not add, how ambitious and laborious I am. Behold me then become a lawyer, and expect in future that my correspondence will have somewhat more of public business in it. But if it ever should be my fortune to have any share in administration, you shall be my Atticus, the partner of my plans, the confidant of my secrets. Do not, however, suppose, that I have altogether renounced polite literature. I intend shortly to publish my English poems; and I mean to bring my tragedy of Soliman on the stage, when I can find proper actors for the performance of it. I intend also composing an epic poem, on a noble subject, under the title of Britanneis: but this I must defer until I have more leisure, with some degree of independence. In the mean time, I amuse myself with the choicest of the Persian poets; and I have the good fortune to possess many manuscripts, which I have either purchased, or borrowed from my friends, on various subjects, including history, philosophy, and some of the most celebrated poetry of Persia.

I am highly delighted with Jami's poem of Yusef and Zuleika; it contains somewhat more than four thousand couplets, each of which is a star of the first brilliance. We have six copies of this work at Oxford, one of which is correct; it has the vowel points, and is illustrated with the notes of Golius. I also possess a copy, which, as soon as I have leisure, I will print. Let me ask, in the mean time, how you are employed. Do you continue your occupation of elucidating your favourite Hafez? I will most willingly give all the assistance in my power to the publication of your work, if you will have it printed in London; but I scarcely think that any printer will undertake it at his own expense, unless the poems are accompanied with an English or French translation, for you cannot conceive how few English gentlemen understand Latin.—Let me recommend to you, therefore, to give a literal version of Hafez in French, with annotations in the same language: and this I think will be more acceptable, even to your own

countrymen, than a Latin translation; though, indeed, you may annex to your work such odes as you have translated into that language. The new edition of Meninski goes on tolerably well. I enclose a specimen of the new Arabic types, and earnestly beg your opinion upon them, that any defects may be corrected as soon as possible. I have had a copper-plate engraving made of one of the odes of Hafez; and may, perhaps, when my circumstances afford it, print an edition of Jami's whole poem in the same manner. A work of this kind on silken paper would, I doubt not, be very acceptable to the governor of Bengal, and the other principal persons in India. I cannot conceive what is become of the book which I sent to you; but I will take the first opportunity of transmitting a fairer and more correct copy, together with my little Treatise on the Literature of Asia, and my Grammar of the Persian Language, which is printed with some degree of elegance; and I earnestly entreat you to tell me if any thing is wrong in it, or any thing omitted, that the next edition may be more perfect. I only wait for leisure to publish my Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry.

Do not, however, imagine that I despise the usual enjoyments of youth; no one can take more delight in singing and dancing than I do, nor in the moderate use of wine, nor in the exquisite beauty of the ladies, of whom London affords an enchanting variety; but I prefer glory, my supreme delight, to all other gratifications, and I will pursue it through fire and water, by day and by night. Oh! my Charles (for I renounce all ceremony, and address you with ancient simplicity), what a boundless scene opens to my view! If I had two lives I should scarcely find time for the due execution of all the public and private projects which I have in mind!

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. Jones to J. Wilmot, Esq.

Univ. Coll. Oxford, 3d of June, 1771.

My dear Wilmot,

It makes me very happy to hear that my Lord Chief Justice does not retire on account of ill health, but from a motive which does him the highest honour. He will now enjoy the greatest happiness of human life, ease with dignity, after having passed through the most honourable labour without danger. I should think myself highly blessed, if I could pursue a similar course in my small sphere, and after having raised a competency at the bar, could retire to the bowers of learning and the arts.

I have just begun to contemplate the stately edifice of the laws of England,—

"The gather'd wisdom of a thousand years,"—

if you will allow me to parody a line of Pope. I do not see why the study of the law is called dry and unpleasant; and I very much suspect that it seems so to those only who would think any study unpleasant, which required a great application of the mind, and exertion of the memory. I have read most attentively the two first volumes of "Blackstone's Commentaries," and the two others will require much less attention. I am much pleased with the care he takes to quote his authorities in the margin, which not only give a sanction to what he asserts, but point out the sources to which the student may apply for more diffusive knowledge. I have opened two common-place books, the one of the law, the other of oratory, which is surely too much neglected by our modern speakers. I do not mean the popular eloquence, which cannot be tolerated at the bar, but that correctness of style and elegance of method, which at once

pleases and persuades the hearer.—But I must lay aside my studies for about six weeks, while I am printing my Grammar, from which a good deal is expected; and which I must endeavour to make as perfect as a human work can be. When that is finished I shall attend the Court of King's Bench very constantly, and shall either take a lodging in Westminster, or accept the invitation of a friend in Duke Street, who has made me an obliging offer of apartments.

I am sorry the characters you sent me are not Persian but Chinese, which I cannot decipher without a book, which I have not at present, but *tous Chinois qu'ils sont*, I shall be able to make them out when the weather will permit me to sit in the Bodleian. In the mean time, I would advise you to inquire after a native of China, who is now in London; I cannot recollect where he lodges, but shall know when I come to town, which will be to-morrow or Saturday. I shall be at Richardson's till my Grammar is finished, unless I can buy a set of chambers in the Temple, which I fear will be difficult. I will certainly call upon you in a day or two. On one of the Indian pictures at your house there was a beautiful copy of Persian verses, which I will beg leave to transcribe, and should be glad to print it, with a translation, in the Appendix to my Grammar. I have not yet had my Persian proposals engraved; but when you write to your brother you would much oblige me by desiring him to send me a little Persian manuscript, if he can procure it without much trouble. It is a small poem which I intend to print; we have six or seven copies of it at Oxford, but if I had one in my possession it would save me the trouble of transcribing it. I have enclosed its title in Persian and English. I am very glad that your family are well. I wish them joy upon every occasion; my mother and sister desire their compliments to you, and I am, with great regard, yours, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. Jones to Mr. Hawkins.

November 5, 1771.

I SHALL ever gratefully acknowledge, dear sir, my obligations to you for the trouble you take in inspecting my trifles. Had Dryden and other poets met with such a friend, their poems would have been more polished, and consequently more fit to see the light. Your observations are so judicious, that I wish you had not been so sparing of them. I entirely approve of all your corrections, &c.

As to the years in which the poems were written, they are certainly of no consequence to the public, but (unless it be very absurd) I would wish to specify them, for it would hurt me, as a student at the bar, to have it thought that I continue to apply myself to poetry; and I mean to insinuate, that I have given it up for several years, which I must explain more fully in the preface. For a man, who wishes to rise in the law, must be supposed to have no other object.

LETTER XXX.

Dr. Hunt to Mr. Jones.

Ch. Church, March 2, 1774.

Dear sir,

I RETURN you my hearty thanks for your most acceptable present of your excellent book on the Asiatic Poetry. I should have made you my acknowledgments for this great favour before, but I have been so entirely engaged in reading the book (which I have done from the beginning to the end), that I have not had time to think of its worthy author,

any otherwise than by tacitly admiring, as I went along, his exquisitely fine parts, and wonderful learning. Indeed, so engaging is the beautiful style of this admirable performance, and so striking the observations it contains, that it is next to impossible for a person, who has any taste for this branch of literature, when he has once taken it into his hand, to lay it aside again, without giving it a thorough perusal. I find you have enriched this work with a great variety of curious quotations and judicious criticisms, as well as with the addition of several valuable new pieces, since you favoured me with the sight of it before, and the pleasure which I have now had in reading it has been in proportion. I hope this new key to the Asiatic poetry, with which you have obliged the world, will not be suffered to rust for want of use; but that it will prove, what you intended it to be, a happy instrument in the hands of learned and inquisitive men, for unlocking the rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which have been preserved in the Hebrew, Arabic, Persic, and the other Oriental languages; and especially the Hebrew, that venerable channel, through which the sacred compositions of the divinely inspired poets have been conveyed down to us. I hope this will find you well, and am, &c.

P. S. I have seen your proposals for printing the mathematical works of my worthy friend your late father, and beg to be of the number of your subscribers.

LETTER XXXI.

Mr. Jones to F. P. Bayer.

Oct. 4, 1774.

I CAN scarcely find words to express my thanks for your obliging present of a most beautiful and splendid copy of Sallust, with an elegant Spanish translation. You have bestowed upon me, a private, untitled individual, an honour which heretofore has only been conferred upon great monarchs, and illustrious universities. I really was at a loss to decide whether I should begin my letter by congratulating you on having so excellent a translator, or by thanking you for this agreeable proof of your remembrance. I look forward to the increasing splendour, which the arts and sciences must attain in a country, where the son of the king possesses genius and erudition capable of translating and illustrating with learned notes the first of the Roman historians. How few youths amongst the nobility in other countries possess the requisite ability or inclination for such a task! The history of Sallust is a performance of great depth, wisdom, and dignity: to understand it well is no small praise; to explain it properly is still more commendable; but to translate it elegantly, excites admiration. If all this had been accomplished by a private individual, he would have merited applause; if by a youth, he would have had a claim to literary honours; but when to the title of youth that of Prince is added, we cannot too highly extol, or too loudly applaud, his distinguished merit.

Many years are elapsed since I applied myself to the study of your learned language, but I well remember to have read in it, with great delight, the heroic poem of Alonzo, the odes of Garcilasso, and the humorous stories of Cervantes: but I most sincerely declare, that I never perused a more elegant or polished composition than the translation of Sallust; and I readily subscribe to the opinion of the learned author in his preface, that the Spanish language approaches very nearly to the dignity of the Latin.

May the accomplished youth con-

tinue to deserve well of his country and mankind, and establish his claim to distinction above all the princes of the age! If I may be allowed to offer my sentiments, I would advise him to study most diligently the divine works of Cicero, which no man, in my opinion, ever perused without improving in eloquence and wisdom. The epistle which he wrote to his brother Quintus, on the government of a province, deserves to be daily repeated by every sovereign in the world; his books on offices, on moral ends, and the Tusculan question, merit a hundred perusals; and his orations, nearly sixty in number, deserve to be translated into every European language; nor do I scruple to affirm, that his sixteen books of letters to Atticus are superior to almost all histories, that of Sallust excepted. With respect to your own compositions, I have read with great attention, and will again read, your most agreeable book. I am informed that you propose giving a Latin translation of it, and I hope you will do it for the benefit of foreigners. I see nothing in it which requires alteration—nothing which is not entitled to praise. I much wish that you would publish more of your treatises on the antiquities of Asia and Africa. I am confident they would be most acceptable to such as study those subjects. I have only for the present to conclude, by bidding you farewell in my own name, and that of the republic of letters. Farewell.

LETTER XXXII.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

Bath, Dec. 28, 1777.

My dear lord,

I TOLD you, when I had the pleasure of seeing you in London, that it was doubtful whether I should pass my vacation at Amsterdam or at Bath: the naiads of the hot springs have prevailed, you see, over the nymphs of the lakes, and I have been drinking the waters for a month, with no less pleasure than advantage to my health; the improvement of which I ascribe, however, in great measure, to my regular exercise on the downs, and to abstinence from any study that requires too much exertion of the mind. I should have skaited indeed in Holland from town to town, and a little voyage would have dissipated my bile, if I had any: but that scheme I must postpone till another winter, and have sent an excuse to my Dutch friend who expected me.

As I came hither entirely for the purpose of recreating my exhausted spirits, and strengthening my stomach, I have abstained with some reluctance from dancing, an amusement which I am as fond of as ever, but which would be too heating for a water drinker: and as for the idler diversions of a public place, they have not the recommendation of novelty, without which they cannot long please. You, my dear friend, are in the mean time relaxing yourself, from the severer pursuits of science and civil knowledge, with the healthy and manly exercise of the field, from which you will return with a keener appetite to the noble feast, which the Muses are again preparing for you at Cambridge. And here, by way of parenthesis, I must tell you, that I joined a small party of hunters the other morning, and was in at the death of a hare; but I must confess, that I think hare hunting a very dull exercise, and fit rather for a huntress than a mighty hunter, rather for Diana than Orion. Had I the taste and vigour of Actæon, without his indiscreet curiosity, my game would be the stag or the fox, and I should leave the hare in peace, without sending her to her many friends. This heresy of mine may arise from my fondness for every thing vast, and

my disdain of every thing little; and for the same reason I should prefer the more violent sport of the Asiatics, who enclose a whole district with toils, and then attack the tigers and leopards with javelins, to the sound of trumpets and clarions. Of music I conclude you have as much at Althorpe as your heart can desire; I might here have more than my ears could bear, or my mind conceive, for we have with us La Motte, Fischer, Rauzzini; but, as I live in the house of my old master, Evans, whom you remember, I am satisfied with his harp, which I prefer to the Theban lyre as much as I prefer Wales to ancient or modern Egypt.

I was this morning with Wilkes, who showed me a letter lately written to him from Paris, by Diderot; as I have, you know, a quick memory, I brought away the substance of it, and give it to you in a translation almost literal. "Friend Wilkes, it delights me to hear that you still have sufficient employment for your active mind, without which you cannot long be happy. I have just read the several speeches, which you have delivered on the subject of your present war against the provincials; they are full of eloquence, force, and dignity. I too have composed a speech on the same subject, which I would deliver in your senate, had I a seat in it:—'I will wave for the present, my countrymen, all considerations of the justice or injustice of the measures you are pursuing; I well know that to be an improper topic at the time when the public welfare is immediately concerned. I will not even question at present your power to reduce an exasperated and desperate people; but consider, I entreat you, that you are surrounded by nations by whom you are detested; and say, for heaven's sake, how long you will give them reason to laugh at the ridiculous figure you are making.' This is my harangue; it is short in words, but extensive in meaning." So far, my dear lord, we have no reason to censure the thoughts or expressions of the learned Encyclopedist: what follows is so profligate, that I would not transcribe it, if I were not sure that you would join with me in condemning it. "As to yourself," he adds, "be cheerful; drink the best wines; keep the gayest company; and, should you be inclined to a tender passion, address yourself to such women as make the least resistance; they are as amusing and as interesting as others. One lives with them without anxiety, and quits them without regret." I want words, Diderot, to express the baseness, the folly, the brutality of this sentiment. I am no cynic, but as fond as any man at Paris of cheerful company, and of such pleasures as a man of virtue need not blush to enjoy; but if the philosophy of the French academicians be comprised in your advice to your friend Wilkes, keep it to yourself, and to such as you. I am of a different sect. He concludes his letter with some professions of regard, and with a recommendation of a young Frenchman, who told Wilkes some speeches of Diderot to the empress of Russia, which you shall hear at some other time. I am interrupted, and must leave you with reluctance till the morning.

LETTER XXXIII.

Edmund Burke to Mr. Jones.

March 12, 1779.

My dear sir,

I GIVE you many thanks for your most obliging and valuable present, and feel myself extremely honoured by this mark of your friendship. My first leisure will be employed in an attentive perusal of an author, who had merit enough to fill up a

part of yours, and whom you have made accessible to me with an ease and advantage, which one so many years disused to Greek literature as I have been, could not otherwise have. Isæus is an author of whom I know nothing but by fame: I am sure that any idea I had from thence conceived of him will not be at all lessened by seeing him in your translation. I do not know how it has happened, that orators have hitherto fared worse in the hands of the translators than even the poets; I never could bear to read a translation of Cicero. Demosthenes suffers I think somewhat less; but he suffers greatly; so much, that I must say, that no English reader could well conceive from whence he had acquired the reputation of the first of orators. I am satisfied that there is now an eminent exception to this rule, and I sincerely congratulate the public on that acquisition. I am, with the greatest truth and regard, my dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

Temple, Oct. 13, 1778.

My dear lord, captain, and friend (of all which titles no man entertains a juster idea than yourself), how shall I express the delight which your letter from Warley camp has given me! I cannot sufficiently regret, that I was so long deprived of that pleasure; for, intending to be in London soon after the circuit, I had neglected to leave any directions here about my letters; so that yours has lain almost a month upon my table, where I found it yesterday on my return from the country. I ought indeed to have written first to you, because I was a rambler, you stationary; and because the pen has been my peculiar instrument, as the sword has been yours, this summer; but the agitation of forensic business, and the sort of society in which I have been forced to live, afforded me few moments of leisure, except those in which nature calls for perfect repose, and the spirits, exhausted with fatigue, require immediate reparation. I rejoice to see that you are a votary, as Archilocus says of himself, both of the Muses and of Mars; nor do I believe, that a letter full of more manly sentiments, or written with more unaffected elegance, than yours, has often been sent from a camp. You know I have set my mind on your being a fine speaker in next parliament, in the cause of true constitutional liberty, and your letters convince me that I shall not be disappointed. To this great object, both for your own glory and your country's good, your present military station will contribute not a little: for a soldier's life naturally inspires a certain spirit and confidence, without which the finest elocution will not have a full effect. Not to mention Pericles, Xenophon, Cæsar, and a hundred other eloquent soldiers among the ancients, I am persuaded that Pitt (whom by the way I am far from comparing to Pericles) acquired his forcible manner in the field where he carried the colours. This I mention in addition to the advantages of your present situation, which you very justly point out: nor can I think your summer in any respect uselessly spent, since our constitution has a good defence in a well-regulated militia, officered by men who love their country; and a militia so regulated may in due time be the means of thinning the formidable standing army, if not of extinguishing it. Captain *** is one of the worthiest as well as tallest men in the kingdom; but he, and his Socrates, Dr. Johnson, have such prejudices in politics, that one must be upon one's guard in their company, if

one wishes to preserve their good opinion. By the way, the dean of Gloucester has printed a work, which he thinks a full confutation of "Locke's Theory of Government;" and his second volume will contain a new theory of his own; of this when we meet. The disappointment to which you allude, and concerning which you say so many friendly things to me, is not yet certain. My competitor is not yet named; many doubt whether he will be: I think he will not, unless the chancellor should press it strongly. It is still the opinion and wish of the bar, that I should be the man. I believe the minister hardly knows his own mind. I cannot legally be appointed till January, or next month at soonest, because I am not a barrister of five years' standing till that time: now many believe that they keep the place open for me till I am qualified. I certainly wish to have it, because I wish to have twenty thousand pounds in my pocket before I am eight-and-thirty years old; and then I might contribute in some little degree towards the service of my country in parliament, as well as at the bar, without selling my liberty to a patron, as too many of my profession are not ashamed of doing: and I might be a speaker in the house of commons in the full vigour and maturity of my age; whereas, in the slow career of Westminster Hall, I should not perhaps, even with the best success, acquire the same independent station till the age at which Cicero was killed. But be assured, my dear lord, that if the minister be offended at the style in which I have spoken, do speak, and will speak, of public affairs, and on that account should refuse to give me the judgeship, I shall not be at all mortified, having already a very decent competence, without a debt or a care of any kind. I will not break in upon you at Warley unexpectedly; but whenever you find it most convenient, let me know, and I will be with you in less than two hours.

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

Temple, Feb. 4, 1780.

THE public piety having given me this afternoon what I rarely can obtain, a short intermission of business, can I employ my leisure more agreeably than in writing to my friend? I shall send my letter at random, not knowing whether you are at Althorpe or at Buckingham, but persuading myself that it will find you without much delay. May I congratulate you and our country on your entrance upon the great career of public life? If there ever was a time when men of spirit, sense, and virtue, ought to stand forth, it is the present. I am informed, that you have attended some county meetings, and are on some committees. Did you find it necessary or convenient to speak on the state of the nation? It is a noble subject, and, with your knowledge as well as judgment, you will easily acquire habits of eloquence; but *habits* they are, no less than playing on a musical instrument, or handling a pencil: and as the best musicians and finest painters began with playing sometimes out of tune, and drawing out of proportion, so the greatest orators must begin with leaving some periods unfinished, and perhaps with sitting down in the middle of a sentence. It is only by continued use, that a speaker learns to express his ideas with precision and soundness, and to provide at the beginning of a period for the conclusion of it; but to this facility of speaking the habit of writing rapidly contributes in a wonderful degree. I would particularly impress this truth upon your mind, my dear

friend, because I am fully convinced, that an Englishman's real importance in his country will always be in a compound ratio of his virtue, his knowledge, and his eloquence; without all of which qualities little real utility can result from either of them apart; and I am no less persuaded, that a virtuous and knowing man, who has no natural impediment, may by habit acquire perfect eloquence, as certainly as a healthy man, who has the use of his muscles, may learn to swim or to skate. When shall we meet, and where, that we may talk over these and other matters? There are some topics, which will be more properly discussed in conversation than upon paper, I mean on account of their copiousness; for, believe me, I should not be concerned if all that I write were copied at the post-office, and read before the king in council. * * * * * * At the same time I solemnly declare, that I will not enlist under the banners of a party: a declaration which is, I believe, useless, because no party would receive a man, determined as I am to think for himself. To you alone, my friend, and to your interests, I am firmly attached, both from early habit and from mature reason; from ancient affection unchanged for a single moment, and from a full conviction, that such affection was well placed. The views and wishes of all other men I will analyze and weigh with that suspicion and slowness of belief, which my experience, such as it is, has taught me; and to be more particular, although I will be jealous of the *regal* part of our constitution, and always lend an arm towards restraining its proud waves within due limits, yet my most vigilant and strenuous efforts shall be directed against any oligarchy that may rise: being convinced, that on the popular part of every government depends its real force, the obligation of its laws, its welfare, its security, its permanence. I have been led insensibly to write more seriously than I had intended; my letters shall not always be so dull; but with so many public causes of grief or of resentment, who can at all times be gay?

LETTER XXXVI.

Mr. Jones to the Rev. E. Cartwright.

Lamb's Buildings, Temple, May 16, 1780.

Dear sir,

SINCE my friends have declared me a candidate for the very honourable seat which sir Roger Newdigate intends to vacate, I have received many flattering testimonies of regard from several respectable persons; but your letter, dated May 8th, which I did not receive till this morning, is, without a compliment, the fairest and most pleasing fruit of the competition in which I am engaged. The rule of the University, which is a very noble one, forbidding me to solicit votes for myself, I have not been at liberty even to apply to many persons whom it is both a pleasure and honour to know. Your unsolicited approbation is a great reward of my past toil in my literary career, and no small incentive to future exertions. As to my integrity, of which you are pleased to express a good opinion, it has not yet been tried by any very strong temptations; I hope it will resist them, if any be thrown in my way. This only I may say (and I think without a boast), that my ambition was always very much bounded, and that my views are already attained by professional success adequate to my highest expectations. Perhaps I shall not be thought very unambitious if I add, that my great object of imitation is Mr. Selden; and that if I could obtain the same honour which was conferred on him, I should, like

him, devote the rest of my life to the service of my constituents and my country, to the practice of an useful profession, and to the unremitted study of our English laws, history, and literature. To be approved by you, and such men as you (if many such could be found), would be a sufficient reward to, &c.

P. S. Permit me to add an ode printed (but not published) before the present competition, and at a time when I should have been certainly made a judge in India, by the kindness of lord North, if any appointment had taken place. It proves sufficiently, that no views or connexions can prevent me from declaring my honest sentiments, when I think they may be useful to my country.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. Jones to Dr. Wheeler.

September 2, 1780.

My dear sir,

THE parliament being suddenly dissolved, I must beg you, as one of my best and truest friends, to make it known in the University, that I decline giving the learned body any further trouble, and am heartily sorry for that which has already been given them. It is needless to add, what you well know, that I should never have been the first to have troubled them at all. I always thought a delegation to parliament from so respectable a society a laudable object of true ambition; but I considered it as a distant object, as a reward of long labour and meritorious service in our country; and I conceived, that had I filled a judge's seat in India, with the approbation of my countrymen, I might, on my return, be fixed on as a proper representative of the University. Had not that happened, which you know, I should no more have thought of standing now, than of asking for a peerage. As to principles in politics, if my success at Oxford, at any future time, depend upon a change of them, my cause is hopeless: I cannot alter or conceal them, without abandoning either my reason or my integrity; the first of which is my only guide, and the second my chief comfort, in this passage through life. Were I inclined to boast of any thing, I should certainly boast of making those principles my rule of conduct, which I learned from the best of men in ancient and modern times; and which, my reason tells me, are conducive to the happiness of mankind. As to *men*, I am certainly not hostile to the *ministers*, from whom I have received obligations; but I cannot in conscience approve their *measures*.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mr. Jones to the Bishop of St. Asaph.

November 23, 1780.

My lord,

HAD I not been prevented by particular business from writing to your lordship on Tuesday evening and yesterday, I would have informed you before, that we had done ourselves the honour (and a very great one we shall ever esteem it) of electing your lordship a member of our club.* The election was of course unanimous, and it was carried with the sincere approbation and eagerness of all present. I am sorry to add,

* Generally known by the name of the *Turk's Head Club*, held in Gerrard Street, Soho. The establishment of this club was first proposed by sir Joshua Reynolds to Burke and Johnson, and the original members of it were the friends of these three. The number of members was gradually increased to forty, comprehending men of the most distinguished characters, and eminent for their learning, talents, and abilities.

that lord Camden and the bishop of Chester* were rejected. When bishops and chancellors honour us with offering to dine with us at a tavern, it seems very extraordinary that we should ever reject such an offer; but there is no reasoning on the caprice of men. Of our club I will only say, that there is no branch of human knowledge, on which some of our members are not capable of giving information; and I trust, that as the honour will be ours, so your lordship will receive some pleasure from the company, once a fortnight, of some of our first writers and critics, as well as our most virtuous senators and accomplished men. I think myself highly honoured in having been a member of this society near ten years, and chiefly in having contributed to add such names to the number of our friends as those of your lordship and lord Althorpe. I spoke yesterday in Westminster Hall for two hours and a half on a knotty point of law, and this morning for above an hour on a very interesting public question; to-morrow I must argue a great cause, and am therefore obliged to conclude with assuring your lordship, that I am, with the highest, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

The Bishop of St. Asaph† to Mr. Jones.

Nov. 3, 1781.

Dear sir,

A LETTER from you is always welcome, come sooner or later; yet I cannot help rejoicing at that ceaseless hurry of business, which occasioned your delay in writing, and made me lose a very valuable visit. Riches and reputation, after showing a little coyness at first, are now making their advances at a very great rate, and will soon be as lavish of their charms as you could wish; yet I know you think too liberally to let either your friends or your liberty suffer by their engrossing you too much.

I thank you for the nuptial ode, which, notwithstanding its incorrectness, which you need not complain of, is the most genuine imitation of Pindar I have ever seen. I don't know whether I can assent to your criticism on the word *replete*, that it is never used in a good sense. Were it left to me, I would use it in no sense. It has but little meaning. It was never naturalized in conversation or in prose, and I think makes no figure in verse.

I have another present of value to thank you for—your "Essay on the Law of Bailments." To own the truth, your name to the advertisement made me impatient, and I had sent for it and read it before. It appears to me to be clear, just, and accurate; I mean as clear as the subject will permit. My want of law language, and perhaps of a legal understanding, made me feel great difficulty in following you through your very ingenious distinctions and consequences, of which I thought I could perceive the solidity. I foretel, that this will be your last work. For the future your business and the public will allow you to write no more.

Though I fear it will not be consistent with your employment in Westminster Hall, I cannot help telling you, that for as many days as you can spare between this time and the meeting of parliament, you will find a warm bed and a hearty welcome at Chilbolton. Mrs. Shipley and her daughters desire their compliments, and join in the invitation. I am, &c.

* Dr. Porteus.
† Dr. Shipley.

LETTER XL.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

Jan. 5, 1782.

*O La bella cosa il far niente!** This was my exclamation, my dear lord, on the 12th of last month, when I found myself, as I thought, at liberty to be a rambler, or an idler, or any thing I pleased; but my *mal di gola*† took ample revenge for my abuse and contempt of it, when I wrote to you, by confining me twelve days with a fever and quinsy: and I am now so cramped by the approaching session at Oxford, that I cannot make any long excursion. I enclose my tragical song of "A shepherdess going," with Mazzanti's music, of which my opinion at present is, that the modulation is very artificial, and the harmony good, but that Pergolesi (whom the modern Italians are such puppies as to undervalue) would have made it more pathetic and *heart-rending*, if I may compose such word. I long to hear it sung by Mrs. Poyntz. Pray present the enclosed, in my name, to lady Althorpe. I hope that I shall in a short time be able to think of you, when I read these charming lines of Catullus:‡

> "And soon, to be completely blest,
> Soon may a young Torquatus rise;
> Who, hanging on his mother's breast,
> To his known sire shall turn his eyes,
> Outstretch his infant arms awhile,
> Half ope his little lips, and smile."
> *Printed Translation.*

What a beautiful picture! Can Dominichino equal it? How weak are all arts in comparison of poetry and rhetoric! Instead however of *Torquatus*, I would read *Spencerus*. Do you not think, that I have discovered the true use of the fine arts, namely, in relaxing the mind after toil? Man was born for *labour;* his configuration, his passions, his restlessness, all prove it; but labour would wear him out, and the purpose of it be defeated, if he had not intervals of *pleasure;* and unless that pleasure be *innocent*, both he and society must suffer. Now what pleasures are more harmless, if they be nothing else, than those afforded by polite arts and polite literature?—Love was given us by the Author of our being as the reward of virtue, and the solace of care; but the base and sordid forms of *artificial* (which I oppose to *natural*) society, in which we live, have encircled that heavenly rose with so many thorns, that the wealthy alone can gather it with prudence. On the other hand, mere pleasure, to which the idle are not justly entitled, soon satiates, and leaves a vacuity in the mind more unpleasant than actual pain. A just mixture, or interchange of labour and pleasure, appears alone conducive to such happiness as this life affords. Farewell. I have no room to add my useless name, and still more useless professions of friendship.

* What a delightful thing it is to do nothing.
† Sore throat.
‡ The original is quoted by Mr. Jones:—
Torquatus volo parvulus,
Matris è gremio suæ
Porrigens teneras manus,
Dulce rideat ad patrem,
Semi-hiante labello.

LETTER XLI.

Mr. Jones to Mr. Thomas Yeates.

Lamb's Buildings, April 25, 1782.

Sir,

It was not till within these very few days that I received, on my return from the circuit, your obliging letter, dated the 18th of March, which, had I been so fortunate as to have received earlier, I should have made a point of answering immediately. The society for constitutional information, by electing me one of their members, will confer upon me an honour, which I am wholly unconscious of deserving, but which is so

flattering to me, that I accept of their offer with pleasure and gratitude. I should indeed long ago have testified my regard for so useful an institution by an offer of my humble service in promoting it, if I had not really despaired, in my present situation, of being able to attend your meetings as often as I should ardently wish.

My future life shall certainly be devoted to the support of that excellent constitution, which it is the object of your society to unfold and elucidate; and from this resolution, long and deliberately made, no prospects, no connexion, no station here or abroad, no fear of danger or hope of advantage to myself, shall ever deter or allure me.

A form of government so apparently conducive to the true happiness of the community, must be admired as soon as it is understood; and, if reason and virtue have any influence in human breasts, ought to be preserved by any exertions, and at any hazard. Care must now be taken, lest, by reducing the regal power to its just level, we raise the aristocratical to a dangerous height; since it is from the people that we can deduce the obligation of our laws, and the authority of magistrates.

On the people depend the welfare, the security, and the permanence of every legal government; in the people must reside all substantial power; and to the people must all those, in whose ability and knowledge we sometimes wisely, often imprudently, confide, be always accountable for the due exercise of that power with which they are for a time entrusted.

If the properties of all good government be considered as duly distributed in the different parts of our limited republic, goodness ought to be the distinguished attribute of the crown, wisdom of the aristocracy, but power and fortitude of the people.

May justice and humanity prevail in them all!

I am, &c.

LETTER XLII.

Mr. Jones to the Bishop of St. Asaph.

Wimbledon Park, Sept. 13, 1782.

My lord,

If your lordship received my letter from Calais, you will not be much surprised to see the date of this, and the place where I now am writing, while lady Spencer is making morning visits. Mr. and Mrs. Poyntz have this instant left us. Lord Althorpe being in Northamptonshire, I must give myself some consolation for my disappointment in missing him, by scribbling a few lines to him as soon as I have finished these with which I now trouble your lordship. My excursion to the United *Provinces* (which has been the substitute for my intended expedition to the United *States*) was extremely pleasing and improving to me. I returned last Monday, and, finding all my friends dispersed in various parts of England, am going for a few days into Buckinghamshire, whence I shall go to Oxford, and must continue there till the sessions. Should your lordship be in Hampshire any time in October, and should it be in all respects convenient to you, I will accept this year, with great pleasure, the obliging invitation to Chilbolton, which I was unfortunately prevented from accepting last year. I lament the unhappy dissensions among our great men, and clearly see the vanity of my anxious wish, that they would have played in tune some time longer in the political concert.

The delays about the India judgeship have, it is true, greatly injured me; but, with my patience and assiduity, I could easily recover my lost

ground. I must, however, take the liberty here to allude to a most obliging letter of your lordship from Chilbolton, which I received so long ago as last November, but was prevented from answering till you came to town. It was inexpressibly flattering to me; but my intimate knowledge of the nature of my profession obliges me to assure you, that it requires the *whole man*, and admits of no concurrent pursuits; that, consequently, I must either give it up, or it will engross me so much, that I shall not for some years be *able to enjoy the society of my friends, or the sweets of liberty*. Whether it be a wise part to live uncomfortably, in order to die wealthy, is another question; but this I know by experience, and have heard old practitioners make the same observation, that a lawyer, who is in earnest, must be chained to his chambers and the bar for ten or twelve years together. In regard to your lordship's indulgent and flattering prediction, that my "Essay on Bailments" would be my last work, and that, for the future, business and the public would allow me to write no more; I doubt whether it will be accomplished, whatever may be my practice or situation; for I have already prepared many tracts on jurisprudence; and when I see the volumes written by lord Coke, whose annual gains were twelve or fourteen thousand pounds, by lord Bacon, sir Matthew Hale, and a number of judges and chancellors, I cannot think that I should be hurt in my professional career, by publishing now and then a law tract upon some interesting branch of the science; and the science itself is indeed so complex, that, without *writing*, which is *the chain of memory*, it is impossible to remember a thousandth part of what we read or hear. Since it is my wish therefore to become in time as great a lawyer as Sulpicius, I shall probably leave as many volumes of my works as he is said to have written. As to politics, I begin to think, that the natural propensity of men to dissent from one another will prevent them, in a corrupt age, from uniting in any laudable design; and at present I have nothing to do but to *rest on my oars*, which the Greek philosophers, I believe, called ἐπέχειν, a word which Cicero applies in one of his letters to the same subject.

My best respects to the ladies, for whom I would certainly have brought some Virginia nightingales, if my western expedition had taken place, since I was informed by the captain, with whom I should have sailed, that they might have been kept in the cabin without any danger.

LETTER XLIII.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

Chilbolton, Oct. 21, 1782.

Madam,

THOUGH I wrote so lately to your ladyship, and cannot hope by any thing I can now say to make amends for the dulness of my last letter; yet, as some of the ladies here are this moment writing to St. James's Place, I cannot prevail on myself to decline joining so agreeable a party, especially as the very favourable accounts which were last night received of lord Spencer's health have given me spirits, and made me eager to offer my sincere congratulations. Yes; I rejoice with the truest sincerity, that his lordship's health is so likely to be re-established; for I cannot name a man of rank in the nation, in whose health the public and all mankind, as well as his family and friends, are more truly interested. I have passed my time at Chilbolton so agreeably, that ten days have appear-

ed like one: and it gives me concern, that the near approach of the term will oblige me to leave so charming and improving a society at the end of this week; after which I shall hope to find my friends at Midgham in perfect health; and then farewell, a long farewell, to all my rational and interesting pleasures, which must be succeeded by the drudgery of drawing bills in equity, the toil of answering cases, the squabbles of the bar, and the more vexatious dissensions and conflicts of the political world, which I vainly deprecated, and now as vainly deplore. How happy would it be if statesmen had more *music in their souls*, and could bring themselves to consider, that what harmony is in a concert, such is union in a state; but in the great orchestra of politics I find so many musicians out of humour, and instruments out of tune, that I am more tormented by such dissonance than the man in Hogarth's print, and am more desirous than ever of being transported to the distance of five thousand leagues from all this fatal discord. Without a metaphor, I lament with anguish the bitterness and animosity, with which some of my friends have been assailing others; as if empty altercation could be the means of procuring any good to this afflicted country. I find myself, in more instances than one, like poor Petrarch, wishing to pass my days

Fra' magnanimi pochi; à chi'l ben piace,
Di lor chi m' assecura?
Io vo gridando pace, pace, pace.*

—but I shall not be heard, and must console myself with the pleasing hope, that your ladyship, and the few friends of virtue and humanity, will agree in this sentiment with, &c.

* Among the magnanimous few, whom virtue pleases: who will secure to me this blessing? I go crying *peace, peace, peace.*

LETTER XLIV.

Sir William Jones to Lord Ashburton.

April 27, 1783.

YOUR kind letter found me on board the Crocodile: I should have been very unhappy had it missed me, since I have long habituated myself to set the highest value on every word you speak, and every line you write. Of the two enclosed letters to our friends, Impey and Chambers, I will take the greatest care, and will punctually follow your directions as to the first of them. My departure was sudden indeed; but the Admiralty were so anxious for the sailing of this frigate, and their orders were so peremptory, that it was impossible to wait for any thing but a breeze. Our voyage has hitherto been tolerably pleasant, and, since we left the Channel, very quick. We begin to see albicores about the ship, and to perceive an agreeable change of climate. Our days, though short, give me ample time for study, recreation, and exercise; but my joy and delight proceed from the surprising health and spirits of Anna Maria, who joins me in affectionate remembrance to lady Ashburton. As to you, my dear lord, we consider you as the spring and fountain of our happiness, as the author and parent (a Roman would have added, what the coldness of our northern language will hardly admit, the *god*) of our fortunes. It is possible indeed, that by incessant labour and irksome attendance at the bar, I might in due time have attained all that my very limited ambition could aspire to; but in no other station than that which I owe to your friendship, could I have gratified at once my boundless curiosity concerning the people of the East, continued the exercise of my profession, in which I sincerely delight, and en-

joyed at the same time the comforts of domestic life. The grand jury of Denbighshire have found, I understand, the bill against the dean of St. Asaph, for publishing my dialogue; but as an indictment for a theoretical essay on government was, I believe, never before known, I have no apprehension for the consequences. As to the doctrines in the tract, though I shall certainly not preach them to the Indians, who must and will be governed by absolute power, yet I shall go through life with a persuasion, that they are just and rational; that substantial freedom is both the daughter and parent of virtue; and that virtue is the only source of public and private felicity. Farewell.

LETTER XLV.

Sir William Jones to Dr. Patrick Russel.

Calcutta, March 10, 1784.

You would readily excuse my delay in answering your obliging letter, if you could form an idea of the incessant hurry and confusion, in which I have been kept ever since my arrival in Bengal, by necessary business or necessary formalities, and by the difficulty of settling myself to my mind, in a country so different from that which I have left. I am indeed, at best, but a bad correspondent; for I never write by candle-light; and find so much Arabic or Persian to read, that all my leisure in a morning is hardly sufficient for a thousandth part of the reading that would be highly agreeable and useful to me; and as I purpose to spend the long vacation up the country, I wish to be a match in conversation with the learned natives, whom I may happen to meet.

I rejoice that you are so near, but lament that you are not nearer; and am not without hope, that you may one day be tempted to visit Bengal, where I flatter myself you will give me as much of your company as possible.

Many thanks for your kind hints in regard to my health. As to me, I do not expect, as long as I stay in India, to be free from a bad digestion, the morbus literatorum, for which there is hardly any remedy, but abstinence from too much food, literary and culinary. I rise before the sun, and bathe after a gentle ride; my diet is light and sparing, and I go early to rest; yet the activity of my mind is too strong for my constitution, though naturally not infirm, and I must be satisfied with a valetudinarian state of health. If you should meet with any curiosities on the coast, either in your botanical rambles or in reading, and will communicate them to our society, lately instituted for inquiring into the history, civil and natural, the antiquities, arts, sciences, and literature of Asia, we shall give you our hearty thanks. There is an Abyssinian here, who knew Mr. Bruce, at Gwender. I have examined him, and he confirms Bruce's account. Every day supplies me with something new in Oriental learning; and if I were to stay here half a century, I should be continually amused.

LETTER XLVI.

Sir William Jones to ———.

April 13, 1784.

* * * * * * * * *

I am discouraged from writing to you as copiously as I wish, by the fear that my letter may never reach you. I enclose however a hymn to the Indian Cupid, which is here said to be the only correct specimen of Hindu mythology that has appeared; it is certainly new, and quite original, except the form of the stanza, which is Milton's. I add the character of lord Ashburton, which

my zeal for his fame prompted me to publish.

* * * * * * * * *

Had I dreamt that the dialogue would have made such a stir, I should certainly have taken more pains with it. I will never cease to avow and justify the doctrine comprised in it. I meant it merely as an imitation of one of Plato's, where a boy, wholly ignorant of geometry, is made by a few simple questions to demonstrate a proposition; and I intended to inculcate, that the principles of government were so obvious and intelligible, that a clown might be brought to understand them. As to raising sedition, I as much thought of raising a church.

My dialogue contains my system, which I have ever avowed, and ever will avow; but I perfectly agree (and no man of sound intellect can disagree) that such a system is wholly inapplicable to this country, where millions of men are so wedded to inveterate prejudices and habits, that, if liberty could be forced upon them by Britain, it would make them as miserable as the cruelest despotism.

Pray remember me affectionately to all my friends at the bar, whom I have not time to enumerate; and assure my academical and professional friends, that I will write to them all when I have leisure. Farewell, &c.

LETTER XLVII.

Sir Wm. Jones to Charles Chapman, Esq.

Gardens, near Allipore, April 26, 1784.

ALLOW me, dear sir, to give you the warmest thanks, in my own name, and in that of our infant society, for the pleasure which we have received from your interesting account of Cochin China, with considerable extracts from which we have been favoured by our patrons. Our meetings are well attended, and the society may really be said, considering the recent time of its establishment, to flourish.

We have been rather indisposed, the weather being such as we had no idea of in England, excessive heat at noon, and an incessant high wind from morning to night; at this moment it blows a hurricane, and my study reminds me of my cabin at sea. Our way of life however is quite pastoral in this retired spot; as my prime favourites, among all our pets, are two large English sheep, which came with us from Spithead, and, having narrowly escaped the knife, are to live as long and as happily with us as they can; they follow us for bread, and are perfectly domestic. We are literally lulled to sleep by Persian nightingales; and cease to wonder, that the Bulbul, with a *thousand tales*, makes such a figure in Oriental poetry. Since I am resolved to sit regularly in court as long as I am well, not knowing how soon I may be forced to remit my attention to business, I shall not be at liberty to enter my budgerow till near the end of July, and must be again in Calcutta on the 22d of October, so that my time will be very limited; and I shall wish if possible to see Benares.

LETTER XLVIII.

Sir William Jones to J. Shore, Esq.

June 24.

* * * * * * * * *

I AM well, rising constantly between three and four, and usually walking two or three miles before sun-rise; my wife is tolerably well; and we only lament that the damp weather will soon oblige us to leave our herds and flocks, and all our rural delights, on the banks of the Baghiratti. The bu-

siness of the court will continue at least two months longer, after which I purpose to take a house at Bandell, or Hugli, and pass my autumnal vacation, as usual, with the Hindu bards. I have read your pundit's curious book twice in Sanscrit, and will have it elegantly copied: the *Dabistan*, also, I have read through twice with great attention; and both copies are ready to be returned, as you shall direct. Mr. R. Johnston thinks he has a young friend who will translate the *Dabistan;* and the greatest part of it would be very interesting to a curious reader, but some of it cannot be translated. It contains more recondite learning, more entertaining history, more beautiful specimens of poetry, more ingenuity and wit, more indecency and blasphemy, than I ever saw collected in a single volume: the two last are not the author's, but are introduced in the chapters on the heretics and infidels of India. On the whole, it is the most amusing and instructive book I ever read in Persian.

I hear nothing from Europe but what all the papers contain; and that is enough to make me rejoice exceedingly that I am in Asia. Those with whom I have spent some of my happiest hours, and hope to spend many more on my return to England, are tearing one another to pieces, with the enmity, that is proverbial here, of the snake and the ichneumon. I have nothing left, therefore, but to wish what is right and just may prevail, to discharge my public duties with unremitted attention, and to recreate myself at leisure with the literature of this interesting country.

LETTER XLIX.

Sir William Jones to J. Shore, Esq.

Chrishna-nagur, Aug. 16, 1786.

I THANK you heartily, my dear sir, for the tender strains of the unfortunate Charlotte,* which have given us pleasure and pain; the sonnets which relate to herself are incomparably the best. Petrarca is little known; his sonnets, especially the first book, are the least valuable of his works, and contain less natural sentiments than those of the swan of Avon; but his odes, which are political, are equal to the lyric poems of the Greeks; and his triumphs are in a triumphant strain of sublimity and magnificence. Anna Maria gives you many thanks for the pleasure you have procured her. We are in love with this pastoral cottage; but though these three months are called a vacation, yet I have no vacant hours. It rarely happens that favourite studies are closely connected with the strict discharge of our duty, as mine happily are; even in this cottage I am assisting the court, by studying Arabic and Sanscrit, and have now rendered it an impossibility for the Mohammedan or Hindu lawyers to impose upon us with erroneous opinions.

This brings to my mind your honest pundit Rhadacaunt, who refused, I hear, the office of pundit to the court, and told Mr. Hastings, that he would not accept of it if the salary were doubled; his scruples were probably religious; but they would put it out of my power to serve him, should the office again be vacant. His unvarnished tale I would have repeated to you, if we had not missed one another on the river; but since I despair of seeing you until my return to Calcutta, at the end of October, I will set it down here, as nearly as I can recollect, in his own words:—

"My father (said he) died at the age of a hundred years, and my mother, who was eighty years old, became a *sati*, and burned herself to expiate sins. They left me little besides good principles. Mr. Hastings purchased for me a piece of land, which

* Sonnets by Charlotte Smith.

at first yielded twelve hundred rupees a year; but lately, either through my inattention or through accident, it has produced only one thousand. This would be sufficient for me and my family; but the duty of Brahmans is not only to teach the youths of their sect, but to relieve those who are poor. I made many presents to poor scholars and others in distress, and for this purpose I anticipated my income: I was then obliged to borrow for my family expenses, and I now owe about three thousand rupees. This debt is my only cause of uneasiness in this world; I would have mentioned it to Mr. Shore, but I was ashamed."

Now the question is, how he can be set upon his legs again, when I hope he will be more prudent. If Bahman* should return to Persia, I can afford to give him one hundred rupees a month, till his debt shall be discharged out of his rents; but at present I pay more in salaries to my native scholars than I can well afford; nevertheless I will cheerfully join you in any mode of clearing the honest man, that can be suggested; and I should assist him merely for his own sake, as I have more Brahmanical teachers than I can find time to hear. Adieu, my dear sir, &c.

LETTER L.

Sir Wm. Jones to Thomas Caldicott, Esq.

Sept. 24, 1788.

We had incessant labour for six hours a-day, for three whole months, in the hot season between the tropics; and, what is a sad consequence of long sittings, we have scarcely any vacation. I can, therefore, only write to you a few lines this autumn. Before your brother sent me "Lewisdon Hill," I had read it twice aloud to different companies, with great delight to myself and to them: thank the author in my name. I believe his nameless rivulet is called *Bret* or *Brit* (whence *Bridport*) by Michael Drayton, who describes the fruitful Marshwood. * * * *

Pray assure all who care for me, or whom I am likely to care for, that I never, directly or indirectly, asked for the succession to sir E. Impey; and that if any indiscreet friend of mine has asked for it in my name, the request was not made by my desire, and never would have been made with my assent.

*"Co' magnanimi pochi, a chi 'l ben piace,"**

I have enough; but if I had not, I think an ambitious judge a very dishonourable and mischievous character. Besides, I never would have opposed sir R. Chambers, who has been my friend twenty-five years, and wants money, which I do not.

I have fixed on the year 1800 for my return towards Europe, if I live so long, and hope to begin the new century auspiciously among my friends in England.

P. S. Since I wrote my letter, I have amused myself with composing the annexed ode to Abundance. I took up ten or twelve hours to compose and copy it; but I must now leave poetry, and return for ten months to J. N. and J. S.

LETTER LI.

Sir William Jones to Mr. Justice Hyde.

Sept. 19, 1789.

You have given lady Jones great pleasure by informing us, from so good authority, that a ship is arrived from England: she presents you with her best compliments.

Most readily shall I acquiesce in any alleviation of Horrebow's mise-

* A parsi and a native of Yezd, employed by Sir William Jones as a reader.

* With the magnanimous few, whom virtue pleases.

ry, that you and sir Robert Chambers shall think just and legal. I have not one law book with me; nor, if I had many, should I perfectly know where to look for a mitigation by the court of a sentence, which they pronounced after full consideration of all its probable effects on the person condemned. I much doubt whether it can legally be done; nor do I think the petition states any urgent reason for it. First, he mentions *losses already sustained* (not therefore to be prevented by his enlargement), and, in my opinion, they cannot easily be more than he deserves. Next, his wife's health may have been injured by his disgrace, and may not be restored by our shortening the time of his confinement, which, if I remember, is almost half expired, and was as short as justice tempered with lenity would allow. His own health is not said to be affected by the imprisonment in such a place, at such a season; for if it were proved that he were dangerously ill, we might, I suppose, remove him to a healthier place, or even let him go to sea, if able surgeons swore, that in their serious opinion, nothing else could save his life. That is by no means the case, and I confess I have no compassion for him; my compassion is for the enslaved children and their parents. Nevertheless, I know the benevolence of your heart, and shall approve whatever you and sir R. C. may do, if any precedent can be found or recollected of a power in the court to do what is now prayed. I am, &c.

LETTER LII.

Sir William Jones to Sir Joseph Banks.

Sept. 17, 1789.

Dear sir Joseph,

THE season for paying my annual epistolary rents being returned with the rough gales of the autumnal equinox, I am eager to offer my tribute where it is most due, to my best landlord, who, instead of claiming, like the India company, sixteen shillings in the pound for the neat profits of my farm (I speak correctly, though metaphorically), voluntarily offers me indulgences, even if I should run in arrears.

You have received, I trust, the pods of the finest Dacca cotton, with which the commercial resident at that station supplied me, and which I sent by different conveyances, some enclosed to yourself, some to sir George Young, and some by private hands. But I have always found it safer to send letters and small parcels by the public packet, than by careless and inconsiderate individuals. I am not partial to the *pryangu*, which I now find is its true name; but Mr. Shore found benefit from it, and procured the fresh plants from Arracan, which died unluckily in their way to Calcutta. But, seriously, it deserves a longer trial before its tonic virtues, if it have any, can be ascertained. It is certainly not so fine a bitter as camomile or columbo root.

I wish politics at the devil, but hope that, when the king recovered, science revived. It gives me great pain to know, that *party*, as it is called (I call it faction, because I hold party to be grounded on principles, and faction on self-interest, which excludes all principle), has found its way into a literary club, who meet reciprocally to impart and receive new ideas. I have deep-rooted political principles, which the law taught me; but I should never think of introducing them among men of science; and if, on my return to Europe, ten or twelve years hence, I should not find more science than politics in the club, my seat in it will be at the service of any politician, who may wish to be one of the party.

An intimate friend of Mr. Blane has written to him, at my request, for the newly discovered fragrant grass; and should the plants be sent before the last ships of the season sail, they shall be sent to you. Whether they be the nard of the ancients, I must doubt, because we have sweet grasses here of innumerable species; and Reuben Burrow brought me an odoriferous grass from the place where the Ganges enters India, and where it covers whole acres, and perfumes the whole country. From his account of it, I suspect it to be Mr. Blane's; but I could make nothing of the dry specimens, except that they differed widely from the *Jatamansi*, which I am persuaded is the Indian nard of Ptolemy. I can only procure the dry *Jatamansi*, but if I can get the stalks, roots, and flowers from Butan, I will send them to you. Since the death of Kœnig we are in great want of a professed botanist. I have twice read with rapture the "Philosophia Botanica," and have Murray's edition of the "Genera et Species Plantarum" always with me; but, as I am no lynx, like Linnæus, I cannot examine minute blossoms, especially those of grasses.

We are far advanced in the second volume of our "Transactions."

LETTER LIII.

Sir Wm. Jones to Sir J. Macpherson, Bart.

Chrishna-nagur, Oct. 15. 1790.

I GIVE you hearty thanks for your postscript, which (as you enjoin secrecy) I will only allude to ambiguously, lest this letter should fall into other hands than yours. Be assured, that what I am going to say does not proceed from an imperfect sense of your kindness; but really I want no addition to my fortune, which is enough for me; and, if the whole legislature of Britain were to offer me a different station from that which I now fill, should most gratefully and respectfully decline it. The character of an ambitious judge is, in my opinion, very dangerous to public justice; and if I were a sole legislator, it should be enacted, that every judge, as well as every bishop, should remain for life in the place which he first accepted. This is not the language of a cynic, but of a man who loves his friends, his country, and mankind; who knows the short duration of human life, recollects that he has lived four-and-forty years, and has learned to be contented. Of public affairs you will receive better intelligence than I am able to give you. My private life is similar to that which you remember: seven hours a day, on an average, are occupied by my duties as a magistrate, and one hour to the new Indian digest: for one hour in the evening I read aloud to lady Jones. We are now travelling to the sources of the Nile with Mr. Bruce, whose work is very interesting and important. The second volume of the "Asiatic Transactions" is printed, and the third ready for the press. I jabber Sanscrit every day with the pundits, and hope, before I leave India, to understand it as well as I do Latin. Among my letters I find one directed to you; I have unsealed it; and though it only shows that I was not inattentive to the note with which you favoured me on the eve of your departure, yet I annex it because it was yours, though brought back by my servant.

The latter part of it will raise melancholy ideas; but death, if we look at it firmly, is only a change of place; every departure of a friend is a sort of death; and we are all continually dying and reviving. We shall all meet: I hope to meet you again in India; but wherever we meet, I expect to see you well and happy.—None of your friends can wish for

your health and happiness more ardently than, my dear sir, &c.

LETTER LIV.

Sir Wm. Jones to Warren Hastings, Esq.

Chrishna-nagur, Oct. 17, 1791.

My dear sir,

BEFORE you can receive this, you will, I doubt not, have obtained a complete triumph over your persecutors; and your character will have risen, not brighter indeed, but more conspicuously bright, from the furnace of their persecution. Happy should I be if I could congratulate you in person on your victory; but though I have a fortune in England which might satisfy a man of letters, yet I have not enough to establish that absolute independence, which has been the chief end and aim of my life; and I must stay in this country a few years longer; lady Jones has, however, promised me to take her passage for Europe in January 1793, and I will follow her when I can. She is pretty well, and presents her kindest remembrance to you and Mrs. Hastings, whom I thank most heartily for a very obliging and elegant letter. My own health has, by God's blessing, been very firm, but my eyes are weak, and I have constantly employed them eight or nine hours a day. My principal amusement is botany, and the conversation of the pundits, with whom I talk fluently in the language of the *gods;* and my business, besides the discharge of my public duties, is the translation of "Menu," and of the digest which has been compiled at my instance. Our society still subsists, and the third volume of their Transactions is so far advanced, that it will certainly be published next season. Samuel Davis has translated the "Siurya Siddhanta," and is making discoveries in Indian astronomy; while Wilford is pursuing his geographical inquiries at Benares, and has found, or thinks he has found, an account of Africa and Europe, and even of *Britain* by name, in the Scanda Puran; he has sent us a chart of the Nile from Sanscrit authorities, and I expect soon to receive his proofs and illustrations. Of public affairs in India I say little, because I can say nothing with certainty; the seasons and elements have been adverse to us in Mysore. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me to be, with unfeigned regard, yours, &c.

LETTER LV.

Sir William Jones to Lord Teignmouth.

My dear sir,

A FEW days after I troubled you about the yacht, I felt a severe pang on hearing of your domestic misfortune: and I felt more for you than I should for most men, on so melancholy an occasion, because I well know the sensibility of your heart. The only topic of consolation happily presented itself to you: reason perhaps might convince us, that the death of a created being never happens without the will of the Creator, who governs this world by a special interposition of his providential care; but, as this is a truth which Revelation expressly teaches us, our only true comfort in affliction must be derived from Christian philosophy, which is so far from encouraging us to stifle our natural feelings, that even the Divine Author of it wept on the death of a friend. This doctrine, though superfluous to you, is always present to my mind; and I shall have occasion in a few years, by the course of nature, to press it on the mind of lady Jones, the great age of whose mother is one of my reasons for hop-

ing most anxiously, that nothing may prevent her returning to England this season.

* * * *

I will follow her as soon as I can, possibly at the beginning of 1795, but probably not till the season after that; for although I shall have more than enough to supply all the wants of a man, who would rather have been Cincinnatus with his plough, than Lucullus with all his wealth, yet I wish to complete the system of Indian laws while I remain in India, because I wish to perform whatever I promise, with the least possible imperfection; and in so difficult a work doubts might arise, which the pundits alone could remove. You continue, I hope, to find the gardens healthy; nothing can be more pleasant than the house in which we live; but it might justly be called the temple of the winds, especially as it has an octagonal form, like that erected at Athens to those boisterous divinities. I cannot get rid of the rheumatism, which their keen breath has given me, and submit with reluctance to the necessity of wrapping myself in shawls and flannel. We continue to be charmed with the perspicuity, moderation, and eloquence of Filangieri.

Of European politics I think as little as possible; not because they do not interest my heart, but because they give me too much pain. I have "good will towards men, and wish peace on earth;" but I see chiefly under the sun the two classes of men whom Solomon describes,—the oppressor and the oppressed. I have no fear in England of open despotism, nor of anarchy. I shall cultivate my fields and gardens, and think as little as possible of monarchs or oligarchs.

I am, &c.

LETTER LVI.

Dr. Young to Mr. Richardson.

Bath, Jan. 3, 1758.

My dearest friend,

NUMBERLESS are your favours: Mr. and Mrs. Ditcher are to me extremely kind. I bless God, I at last find benefit from the waters, as to appetite, rest, and spirits. I have now for three nights had pretty good rest, after two sleepless months: and I believe that persevering in the waters is the point, at least in my complaint.

But, at my time of day, how dare I to complain of small things? on the brink of the grave, and at the door of eternity! What a mercy that I am still here! What a fall have I seen around me! I was here twenty years ago, and scarce find one of the generation alive.

I rejoice, I greatly rejoice, to hear that you are better. Might not Bath be as much your friend as mine? In some points our cases are similar.

I think you told me in a letter, that you once found benefit from it: if you could try again, I would attend you to your last hour.

But, say you, are you idle all this time? No; I am on a great work. How great a work is it to learn to die with safety and comfort! This is, as it should be, my business, unless I think it too much to spend my superannuated hours on that which ought to have been the business of my whole life.

I am now (as it is high time) *setting my house in order*—and therefore desire you to send by the carrier the *parcel of sermons* (which were packed up when I was in town), that I may commit them to the flames.

And please to favour me with my *full and long debt* to you; for I am in pain to have it discharged.

That the wing of an indulgent Providence may be ever stretched

over you and yours, is the earnest prayer of, dear sir, &c.

LETTER LVII.

Mr. Richardson to Dr. Young.

Jan. 1758.

Rev. and ever dear sir,

I CONGRATULATE you, with my whole heart, on the good effect the waters have at last had on your health.

What may we not promise ourselves from so sound and good a constitution, from your regularity and temperance, and from the powers of *such* a mind, invigorating the whole! a mind, which can enjoy, and even enlarge itself, by that very sleeplessness, which tears in pieces the health of others!

"Our cases in some points are similar." Ah, my dear and good sir!—But that exercise, that journeying, which will contribute to your cure, I am unable to take. What a motive do you give me to make you a Bath visit, were I able!—But I hope, on your return, I shall not be deprived of the blessing of your company, and the favour of Mrs. Hallowes's, as was my request, by my daughter Ditcher. I have been often at Bath; but remember not that I received benefit from the waters. The late worthy Dr. Hartley once whispered me, that I must not expect any.

"You are about a great work: to learn to die with safety and comfort." My dear sir, you, that have been so admirable a *teacher* of this very doctrine, in your excellent *Night Thoughts*, must be more than a *learner*. You have not left to *superannuated hours* (which, I hope, if ever they come, are far, very far, distant) that great work. How comfortably, therefore, may you enjoy life, as well as contemplate the closing scene. Your, &c.

P. S. I am sorry that sleeplessness is your complaint. But, when you sleep, you are awake to noble purpose: I, to none at all: my days are nothing but hours of dozings, for want of nightly rest, and through an impatience that I am ashamed of, because I cannot subdue it.

LETTER LVIII.

Miss Collier to Mr. Richardson.

Ryde, Oct. 3, 1755.

Dear sir,

I HAVE delayed answering the kind favour of yours, in hopes I should have seen more of the island, which my good Mrs. Roberts proposed to have shown me; but the weather has been so very cold and comfortless here, that we have not had fine days enough successively to make the pleasant expedition we have intended: if we could have gone, I would have done my best to have given you a description of the views and pretty things I had seen; but I met with some lines, the other day, in a translation of a famous Italian poet, which, in a few expressive words, gives a better account of this sweet country, than I could in a hundred:—

"She wishes much to tarry in this land,
That hath both fruitful earth and pleasant air,
And fountains sweet, and woods on ev'ry hand,
And meadows green, and pastures fresh and fair;
Besides large hav'ns, where ships at ease may stand,
To which the merchants often make repair,
By tempest driven, well loaden with good traffick,
Of things that come from Egypt and from Africk."

This poem was the only book of amusement I brought with me; it is called Ariosto, or Orlando Furioso; and is, in its way, a most wonderful piece of imagination, and really a

very extraordinary work. My good friends at Appley are so kind to supply me with books when I am absent from them at my little cottage, which is not so often as to read a great deal. I am so apprehensive, now the weather grows cold, that I shall soon lose dear Mrs. Roberts and her amiable daughters, that I am as much with them as possible whilst I can have them so near me; and their frequent society is what I fear I shall greatly miss when they go to London; yet, for the sort of people in the low station my old folks are in, I hardly ever met with more simplicity and good sense than they both have; and it is with some degree of pleasure that I sit in an evening with them, and hear the discourse and gossippings of the day: it makes me smile often, and sometimes rises to a downright laugh; and whatever promotes and causes this, with innocence and good humour, is as eligible (as far as I know, in the way of conversation) and as worthy to be ranked of the sort called delightful and pleasing, as in the routs and hurricanes of the great, or at court, or even in company with my lord Chesterfield. I am acquainted with few others in this village besides my old folks; but endeavour to get a speaking and how d'ye kind of knowledge of them all as I meet them; and I hear by this behaviour I have acquired the title amongst them of "a civil gentlewoman," and "a very civil gentlewoman" many of them say; the children bow and curtsey down to the ground, and whisper and jog each other when I am coming, crying, "Here is the gentlewoman coming:" this is homage and respect enough to gratify all the vanity and ambition I have now left, I think, sufficiently. Mrs. Roberts says, when she sees me in my very poor house, sitting on my earthen floor, eating my dinner out of a platter, and my poor bed-chamber without any door to it, and a little window peeping out from under the thatch, bare walls, and every thing suitably poor, that under this humble roof I can have no proud thoughts; but must have killed every grain of worldly pride and vanity before I could sit down contented in such a place. I was forced to make a great slaughter, and lay about me prodigiously, before I could conquer those bitter enemies to peace and humility, called passions; but now I think and hope they all lie dead in heaps at several places in London and elsewhere; and I brought nothing down with me but a bundle of mortifications; or, to speak more seriously, a thorough and humble acquiescence to the Divine Will, and an earnest desire, with patience, resignation, and serenity of mind, to work out my salvation, as soon as it will please God to release me; perhaps a little impatience still remains, which tempts me to add, "The sooner the better;" and madame Maintenon's words, in a letter of hers, occur to me, where she says, "It is high time to die; why should I stay any longer in this world? I have nothing to do in it; and it is generally business and ambitious views that make us fond of staying here."

I was sadly vexed, at my first coming, at a report which had prevailed here, of my being the author of Mr. Fielding's last work, "The Voyage to Lisbon:" the reason which was given for supposing it mine, was to the last degree mortifying (*viz.* that it was so very bad a performance, and fell so far short of his other works, it must needs be the person *with him* who wrote it.) This is the disadvantageous light poor women are held in, by the ill-nature of the world. If they write well, and very ingeniously, and have a brother, then, to be sure—"She could not write so well; it was her brother's, no doubt." If a man falls short of what is expected from his former genius in writing,

and publishes a very dull and unentertaining piece, then, "To be sure it was his sister, or some woman friend who was with him." Alas! my good Mr. Richardson, is not this a hard case?—To you I appeal, as the only candid man, I believe, with regard to women's understandings; and indeed their only champion and protector, I may say, in your writings; for you write of angels, instead of women.

Admiral Byng and admiral Hawke now lie at Spithead; the latter brought in many French prizes with the fleet.

I heard there was a wreck of a West-Indiaman, on the south side of the island, last Friday (but the crew saved), laden with sugar.—Poor souls! it was a great distress the getting on shore, and being plundered, as in all likelihood they were. Had they been drowned, I think I should not have been so sorry; for I pity nobody that dies: I pity those left behind. Oh, that I had died for thee, my dearest friend and sister!—but it was not permitted me. Excuse me this sudden gust of grief: I should not, dare not, trust myself to write on this afflicting and tender subject; it makes me incapable, from want of eyes, to add more than my kindest and best respects to dear Mrs. Richardson and the miss Richardsons, to beg the continuance of your friendship, dear sir, and that you would believe me to be, with the highest esteem, your, &c.

LETTER LIX.

Mr. Richardson to Miss M. Collier.

Dec. 24, 1755.

If my dear miss Collier knew how much I have been immersed in bricks, mortar, plasterers' and carpenters' work, all the summer, and till within this month past, and in that month wholly engrossed by the removal of all my printing materials into the new building, she would think the less hardly of my long silence to a letter that I admire in every line of it.

Do not let this silence deprive me of the description you intended to give me of the views, prospects, situations, that were to offer to you in the excursions you were to make with your hospitable friend, Mrs. Roberts, and her amiable daughters.

Alas! they have left you, I doubt! How are you now? Who have you to associate with, when you carry yourself out of that happy circle? Happy it must be; your ambition trodden under foot—your passions calmed. What a happy creature must you be in these conquests, in your lot, even as you describe it, though it would draw a tear from the eyes of readers less subdued. Your old couple, methinks I love them. I *must*, if they remain kind to you. Sweetly do you describe the power your amiable affability has given you over the affections of the children in your neighbourhood.—"The gentlewoman," my dear miss Collier! The honest villagers distinguish well: you are indeed *the gentlewoman*, and, what is far greater, *the Christian!* I always loved you; but never so well as since I have had the favour of your last letter. How often have I determined to sit down to answer it, and to tell you all I thought of it and you in the time of this long silence!

You regret, my dear miss Collier, the hard fate of women of genius, in being denied the merit of their own works, when well received, and in having them attributed to their brothers and other men friends, &c. But think you not that this is a great deal owing to your own sex, who (the capable ones I mean) hide their talents in a napkin, and are afraid—lovely dastards—of showing themselves capable of the perfections they are mis-

tresses of?—It is well I have not the punishing of such *degraders* of their own sex, so I was going to call them; for do they not, by their wilful and studious concealments of the gifts God has blessed them with, confess, at least indirectly, an inferiority to the other! What is it they fear, in asserting themselves with modesty, and when occasionally called forth? Is it that the men will be afraid of them, and shun them as wives? Unworthy fear! Let the wretches shun and be afraid of them. Unworthy of such blessings, let such men not dare to look up to merits so superior to their own; and let them enter into contract with women, whose sense is as diminutive as their own souls. What loss would a woman of high attainments and of genius have, in a man of a character so low, as to be afraid of the perfections of the woman, who would give him the honour of calling her his!

I was not a little pleased to hear that you kept up a correspondence with so excellent a woman as Mrs. Berthon is described to be by my good friend Mrs. Watts. Miss Lodwich, another admirable lady: But who can forbear being extremely anxious for them, and for many others, among the multitudes that have perished in the most tremendous catastrophe of Lisbon? What a dreadful dispensation!

Some impatience, in my dear miss Collier, seems still remaining to be conquered; and *when* that can be done, and a thorough reliance made on the Divine goodness, so as neither to covet life, nor to wish for death, but to wait the appointed time with cheerfulness—who will be so happy as my dear friend in the Isle of Wight?

But what shall we do for a door to your apartment this cold weather? Cannot you find a way to draw upon me, payable at sight, for five guineas? Oblige me, my dear miss Collier, in the grant of this request.—The promissory note I annex.*

My wife and girls most particularly desire their best wishes to be wafted to you.

Once more excuse my long silence; and believe me to be, with great truth, your, &c.

LETTER LX.

Mr. Richardson to Miss M. Collier.

London, Jan. 5, 1756.

I AM sorry my dear Miss Collier had the thought of returning the note she mentions, unused. Give me not, madam, that mortification: I hope you will not; and, in that hope, will say no more on the subject.

The miss B——'s! True, my dear; they are among the dastards I had in my head, when I inveighed *so vehemently*, you say, against the geniuses of your sex, who studiously, in many inexplicable plaits, wrap up their napkin'd talents. "Punish them." I wish it were in my power. How do you think it should be, for the first fault, on conviction? Why, to banish them for three months to Ryde, in the Isle of Wight. Miss Collier to be the inflicter, and the example, too, of all *human* divestments (allow me the odd expression) for that space of time.

But think you, my good miss Collier, that this elaborate concealment of *God-given* talents is an *honest* one? Would these girls put a cheat upon some little-minded creatures, who would be afraid of such talents in their respective wives as would do them credit? Would they break upon them, when they could not help themselves, and *astun* them with a superiority of good sense? Rather let me ask, would such girls be afraid

* A note for five guineas.

that such men would slight them were they to unplait their napkins? Would they condescend to join hands with men *capable* of slighting them for the excellencies they gave not to themselves? Can you, who read Ariosto, help thinking that you see, on such an idea as this will raise, a lady possessed of the shield of Ruggiero, uncovering it, by surprise, and darting radiant glory in the face of her husband; the caitiff, as in one of the cuts of Harrington's translation, sprawling, dazzled, at her feet?

You honour me with the noble title of a vindicator of your sex; but let me desire you to whisper in the ears of the ladies you mention—"Who, my dears, shall vindicate the honour of a sex, the most excellent of which desert themselves?"—Don't mind their blushing looks at one another by turns:—whisper over again the question, till they are determined to amend; *or*—what *or*?—be sent to the Isle of Wight. No severe punishment, neither, I hope!—the complicated fault considered.

Mrs. Berthon and family, I have the pleasure of telling you, are safe in their persons. Mr. Millar has a letter from Mr. W.—I have not seen it. That gentleman was almost miraculously saved. Terribly extensive, indeed, has been this earthquake! God Almighty preserve us from the effects of these terraqueous convulsions. Were we to persuade ourselves that they are sent as judgments, what have not we of this kingdom to fear?

Your poor frantic girl, perhaps, thought she was avoiding the evil to come, and which she had prophesied would come, when she sought her death in the water. There have been unhappy people, more in their senses than she seems to have been, who have thrown themselves into the arms of death, for fear of dying. This girl must have been earthquake mad, as well as otherwise delirious. Don't you think so?

My wife, my girls, desire their particular respects to you, and join with me in wishing the begun year may be the happiest you have ever known. In the enviable frame of mind you are in, it must be so.

God bless you! adieu! and adieu, my dear miss Collier!

LETTER LXI.

Miss Collier to Mr. Richardson.

Feb. 11, 1756.

I AM much of your opinion, dear sir, as to the dishonesty of those girls who studiously conceal, in many inexplicable plaits (as you say) the glorious talents bestowed on them. I wish they had courage to assert themselves before marriage, and *astun the caitiffs vile*, in order to get rid of them; for I think, should they fall prostrate and sprawling before the dazzling shield of the lady, it would be a properer and more becoming posture for a lover than a husband; besides, it would be highly dishonest in such surpassing geniuses to marry men of inferior understandings in another light than that of deceiving; for ought not the power and government to rest with those who have the superiority of judgment and wisdom? And who would be so base and wanting to her own worth, as voluntarily to enter into a state of submission and acquiescence to the will of a person less qualified to govern than herself—when this would be to enter into a state of the vilest servitude, and the only one truly so called: as the divine Milton describes it, where he says,

"It is not servitude to serve whom God ordains,
Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same:
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is *servitude*,
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier."———

You say (and truly) that there are little-minded creatures who would be afraid of such talents in their respective wives as would outshine themselves.—And again, ask if such girls would be afraid that *such men* should slight them? Why no, surely.—But O! Mr. Richardson (with a deep sigh I say it) that I never had heard men of real good sense, great parts, and many fine qualities, lower themselves down to these little-minded creatures, in inveighing with warmth against an uncommon share of understanding in a wife; and showing but too plainly in their practice, when they come to marry, that they are as much afraid of a rivalship of understanding in their wives as those men you mention.—Indeed, indeed, sir, I have heard and seen this in men of unquestionable good sense!—Where, then, shall we find husbands for our dear uncommon geniuses of girls?—Are not they under a kind of necessity (if they ever intend to marry) to continue their napkins in plaits before marriage, nor ever dare to unfold them, even after marriage, to the generality of men, except they could meet with a noble-minded Sir Charles Grandison, or such as have grace enough to endeavour to tread in his steps.

I have a mixture of joy and tender concern in the account you give me of my friends at Lisbon, and from what I have heard from others. They are safe in their persons, it seems; but poor Mr. St—bs and family have lost every shilling they had in the world, it's said. Dear! what a trying circumstance is this to people in great affluence, as they were. I pray God support and comfort them under this heavy affliction: they are worthy, good people, and I hope they will find friends to assist them.

My good old folks—you can't think how I love them!—the more, I believe, because they hearken with such attention and admiration to Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison, which latter I have now begun to them. They believe both Clarissa and Sir Charles to be real stories, and no work of imagination; and I don't care to undeceive them. The good man is more than threescore, he believes; but quite alive, and has none of the infirmities of age. She has one of the most agreeable and placid countenances I ever saw.—They love each other, and the husband rejoices in the balance of sense being of her side, which it is, in some degree; and glories in her being able to read and write, which he can scarcely do. I can't quit my old folks without expressing my happiness in them, and gratitude to all my kind friends, who put it in my power, by the help my little pittance is to them, to afford them more of the necessaries and comforts of life than they enjoyed before I came.

In short, my good Gaffer and his wife, I believe, are just such good old folks as Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, in Pamela.

Compliments to dear Mrs. Richardson; and believe me to be, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXII.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

Tunbridge Wells, Aug. 2, 1748.

WHAT say you to me *here*, miss Highmore?—"Sure, if you go to Tunbridge (says a lady you dearly love, but not better than every one who has the pleasure of knowing her, loves), you will not value travelling a few miles in order to visit us." Tunbridge Wells are about thirty-eight miles distant from London: Hatch (I have inquired) is about forty: and no extraordinary roads. I, a bad traveller, cannot sit a horse—come hither to drink the waters for health sake—can ill spare the time—pro-

pose but *three* weeks—have been here *one*, last Friday—this *my* situation.

The geniuses of Hatch, how different theirs! Nothing to do but study their diversion and amusement. Tunbridge, in high season, a place devoted to amusement.—Time entirely at command, though not hanging heavy; impossible, indeed, it should.—Vehicles, whether four-wheeled or four-legged, at will; riding, a choice.—And the worthy Dr. Knatchbull here. What says my fair correspondent?—what her worthy and kind friends, to *this?*

Do come and see how your other old lover spins away, hunting after new faces, at fifty-seven. You will see him in his kingdom; and he will read to you a new performance, calculated, indeed, for the perts of the place; "A Dialogue between a Father and a Daughter," very sprightly; a little sprinkling of something better in it, but very sparingly sprinkled; as if the author were afraid that his mind should be thought as antique as his body.—Calculated to reconcile fatherly authority with filial obedience (so he says):—But, I think, to level the former, and throw down distinction.

He read it to the speaker, who thought it better managed than he expected: but referred him to me upon it; for I was present and objected to it. I have, according to my usual prolixity, given him half a sheet upon half a page. He wants me to go on with my remarks—has altered two or three passages; but I think not for the better: it is a task, therefore, that I decline. For I am told I should not scribble—have a large correspondence upon my hands. Business, besides, very ill sparing me; and post and coach employed to carry up my directions, and in receiving accounts of management; with about one half of which, only, I can be pleased.

Lord, Lord! miss Highmore! what figures do Mr. Nash and Mr. Cibber make, hunting after new beauties, and with faces of high importance traversing the walks! God bless you, come and see them!—And if you do, I will show you a still more grotesque figure than either: A sly sinner, creeping along the very edges of the walks, getting behind benches; one hand in his bosom, the other held up to his chin, as if to keep it in its place: afraid of being seen, as a thief of detection. The people of fashion, if he happen to cross a walk (which he always does with precipitation), *unsmiling* their faces, as if they thought him in their way; and he, as sensible of so being, stealing in and out of the booksellers' shops, as if he had one of their glass-cases under his coat. Come and see this odd figure! You never *will* see him, unless I show him to you: and who knows when an opportunity for that may happen again at Tunbridge?

And here have I turned over.—But how ready are you to catch at a pretence for making your letter short, when you say, that you are afraid that I should design mine for an example in that respect! But how little reason have you to call mine short, when I write more (in quantity) in one line, than you do in three; and more in half a page, than you do in four whole ones. What though my length is my dispraise, I cannot help it: I have no patent for brevity: nor is it every one who, like miss Highmore, can write a great deal in a little compass—who can paint the dew-dropt meadows, every spire of grass glittering like diamonds of the first water—the obscuring clouds—the sunny glories of the great luminary—the shady lanes, perfumed and enamelled with honeysuckles—the fragrant fields of new cut hay—the light lasses, and nimble lads, resting on their rakes and forks, lost in wonder and reverence when they be-

hold the *horse-folks*, as you humbly phrase it!—who can anticipate the yellow harvest, the busy hinds, and the reward of industry!—who can figure out, in still superior lights, the beauties of contemplation, which she enjoys in her Clarissa-closet (as she is pleased to call it), with pen, pencil, and books!—the agreeable conversation, at other times, of her enlivening friends; and the charms of dear variety, that soul of female pleasure: and fifty and fifty other no less delightful subjects; and bring them all into the compass of a letter of fifty or sixty short lines!—This is given to miss Highmore to do; but not to me.

Dr. Knatchbull desires his affectionate compliments to all at Hatch. He gives me his countenance in wishing to see you all here. My respectful ones to sir Wyndham and Mrs. Knatchbull. Mr. Cibber's duty attends you. And I am, my dear miss Highmore, your, &c.

P. S. You might have gone on with your subject of happiness: for who is it that tastes it, knows it, and deserves it, if miss Highmore does not?

LETTER LXIII.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

London, July 15, 1753.

My dear miss Highmore was very good to write so soon after her arrival at Weston House: and had I not been obliged to pass two days at Enfield, which set me behind-hand with all my business, she should have had her kind expectations answered before the last week had elapsed.

But why filled my amiable girl the first side of her sheet with so melancholy an account of her depression of spirits, on leaving a father, so well beloved by every body, to go to a delightful spot, and to a lady of whom she is so fond, and who was always so fond of her?

"I hope the vain girl (say you) has not represented herself of too much consequence." You have not, my dear. Do we not all know that you are of the utmost to that indulgent parent; and of very high to all who have the pleasure of your acquaintance? But looks it not as if one of the frankest-hearted girls in Britain took a little hardly some of my past truly paternal freedoms, when she adds—"If she has, I am sure Mr. Richardson will cure her of that mistake." Well, but my dear Highmore, this shall not hinder me from telling you of your faults, if any appear to me; and I hope you will deal as freely with me;—I have multitudes—I wish I were but half as good as I think you.

Your papa writes so well, and is so fond of writing to his beloved daughter, that I will leave it to him to tell you how happy he thinks himself in knowing you to be so; and that you are right in supposing, "that his benevolent heart expands with delight at the account he receives of your health and felicity." When, therefore, you can turn the bright side of things outward, as you do, your mental Æsculapius (as you do a certain man the honour to call him) tells you, that you have prudence and reflection enough to be your own physician; and that, had not your spirits been weakened by indisposition, and a train of disagreeable perplexities, that have affected one of the evenest tempers in woman, you would not have had reason to paint your sensibilities in such dark colours, on your leaving, for such agreeable friends, even a father, whose paternal goodness you have from infancy so largely experienced.

How sweetly, as you describe, do you pass your time! I rejoice, with all my heart, in Mrs. God—ll's hap-

piness. One of the greatest pleasures that a beneficent mind can know, is to have it in her power to lay an obligation on a worthy, on a grateful, mind.

"A strong taste for literature; a mind well stocked and improved by the productions of authors, ancient and modern; an amiable disposition; good sense." Where could your fair friend have made a better choice? Where else so good a one, in such an age as this, of foplings and *petit maîtres?* I wonder not that such a young gentleman "behaves so properly (as you say) to his lady; and that your esteem for him rises every day, more and more, as you are a witness of that his proper and affectionate behaviour to her." I had both reverence and love for her excellent mother; methinks I could wish her to be permitted to look down from her heaven, to see how happy that beloved daughter is, for whose happiness she was so anxious. God continue it to them both—and them to each other, as an example of that conjugal piety, which is so very rare in the present age, among people of condition!

"What a strange character does that of Cicero always appear to you." It is a strange one; yet he was a glorious creature. Great geniuses, we are told, have not small faults. You have made such proper observations on this great man's failings, that it is needless to add to them. And charmingly do you say, "that the truly noble and exemplary character is that, which is uniformly good, great, and wise, in every trial."

What a wretched creature is the man of title you mention! But I have not so much pity for the lady as you have. She knew whom she married, and, I doubt not, proposed to herself at first counterbalances which would content her; and this is evident to me, by the way in which she lives. What signifies to her the low company "he keeps," so as he confines himself "to an obscure corner of his own magnificent house with them;" and leaves her (in the character of "an amiable woman," and, in every one's eye, the more amiable for her misfortunes) "to receive in the rest, and nobler parts of the house, the visits of every creditable family around her?"—so long as she finds herself "honoured and beloved by her visitors; and has the credit, as well as the power, of having ornamented the noble house she reigns in, with absolute sovereignty, according to her own directions?"—so long as she has "an equipage and retinue of her own, every prospect art or nature can afford to please surrounding her stately habitation?" With all these advantages, and such a lord, ask you, can she be tolerably happy? Yes, madam, exquisitely so, as a managing woman, and as one who knew (as I hinted) beforehand the wretched creature she chose to marry. And, indeed, you answer your own question:—"She appears so," say you "(well she may!); and having been long accustomed to the present method (an enviable one it may be called! for must not the man be a loathsome creature?) may really be (the deuce is in her if she be not!) as tranquil and cheerful as her easy and polite deportment seems to denote."

This advantage she moreover reaps from the low and servile company he keeps, that through them she can manage her lord as she pleases; since they and he are hers in absolute property. Come, come, madam, let us show our pity in the right place. The tranquil lady deserves it not—she is a managing woman, as I said: all women love power; she has it in its perfection. She has, perhaps, shown it, eccentrically, in more instances than one; and every body knows, that lady O—— can be lord as well as lady O——, whenever she pleases

—and fit she should, when the poor creature, her lord, so behaves as to be the jest as well as companion of his own menials.

Next Thursday my good-naturedly perverse wife thinks of going to North End!!! O, miss Highmore! women ought to be controlled, if they are like my wife—in pity to themselves they ought. For, when left to their own will, how do they choose! how are they puzzled!

Mrs. G—— has done me favour in her remembrance of me. My best respects attend her, and, if acceptable, hers. I am involved in sentimentizing:—very hard, among so many charming girls, that I could not get myself excused from this task. No helps from any of you. Go, naughty, idle chits—to pretend to approve what I am about, as if it would be promotive of the public good; and yet, when I hoped a finger from every one of you, to find no aid—not so much as extracts from a work ready written to your hands! yet call me papa, boast of filial regards, and so forth: yet, dotard as I am, I cannot forbear priding myself in my girls—and on every occasion styling myself, as now to you, your, &c.

LETTER LXIV.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

London, Jan. 31, 1751.

I AM, when I recollect some of the free things I have formerly written to my dear miss Highmore, extremely angry with myself. I believe I loved to blame rather than commend, some years ago. Fie upon me, for my ill-nature, if so—and vainly too—setting up for a Mentor, when I was but a Momus. But do I grow better-natured, and see clearer, as I grow older? I congratulate myself upon that, if I do. What admirable observations you make on the consequence it is for young persons to be thrown early into good and improving company! I had a good mind to transcribe every word you wrote on this subject, and to beg of you to let it pass for my own. What a poor creature was I at your age! And you were always so good—were you not?

But, though I love you for your charity, when you infer from premises very laudable, that we should make great allowances in errors, not grossly immoral, for those who have not had the benefit of being accustomed in their youth to good and improving company, I cannot allow of the abatement you mention to be made, of the merit of those who have had better opportunities, and improved by them. I will not, my dear miss Highmore, allow of your level; in order to bring down to a state of nature, those who owe their merit to actions that are the consequences of habitual virtue. Let us judge of merit and demerit as they appear to us, from whatever source they spring; and not, my dear child, think it assurance to condemn the contemptible. We shall then encourage merit (too apt to be despised by such, in order to bring it down to their own level), and, through shame, have a chance to amend the faulty, and make them strive to be measured by the standard of the others. It is not to be imagined what it is in the power of women to do in this particular: especially of those who are amiable in person, and have a reputation for good sense. Often have I seen a coxcomb, who set out with all the confidence of a laughing Sir Hargrave, shrink into himself, merely at the reproving eye, and restrained smile, of a young lady of judgment; and particularly, if she has had the address to turn round on the spot, and distinguish, by her smiling familiarity, another man in

company, with whom she had reason to be better pleased.

No vain woman can be more fond of admiration than men of this cast: let them be conscious of a judiciously given disappointment, and no men are such nothings. The sensible woman, who laughs with the creature she should laugh at, debases herself; puts herself on a level with him. But this is the judgment, to avoid superciliousness, and being really prudish (no matter for the aspersion) in the correction she looks; for a look will give it. I am speaking of a sensible woman, you know!—such women, scores of which, I was going to say, I have the happiness to know.

"The admonitions of parents can never have the effect on young minds, that the examples of persons near their own age will produce; and reasons why it must be so are obvious and natural enough." Never, miss H——! where the parents are companionable to their children; and can allow for the foibles of youth—such as yours, suppose! Where the children are reasonable, and have no points in view, which they are ashamed to own!—What! never, miss H——? And are there no such cases? Cannot there be such open-hearted, frank girls as Harriet, where there is a Mrs. Harley or Mrs. Selby?—Unhappy that there are not more such indulgent parents, and such undisguisedly-minded children! How obvious soever the reason for what you say is, there cannot be a more dangerous doctrine propagated among young people, than that which springs from an allowance of this nature. And I have, therefore, taken notice in print that young people, in certain cases, should never be determined by the advice of young people; and the less by that of those who are in the same circumstances with themselves. It is not, I have said, what you would do, Polly, Sukey, &c. were you in my case; but what ought to be done. I know that your observation is rather owing to facts than justice. But we will not, if you please, too readily give up justice to facts, lest we should make custom a law; where it would be of general use to applaud the exception, and to endeavour to weaken the force of the faulty rule.

Give me leave to say, that I intended more by setting in strong lights the frankness of Harriet's character, in one of the most delicate circumstances of female life, than what, at first sight, may be thought of, on a cursory reading. What do you think I have had the confidence to answer to the pressing instances of two persons, for whom I have great honour, that I would begin a new piece?—that I would think of doing so, when I had reason to believe, that the many delicate situations that this last piece, as well as Clarissa, abounded with, were generally understood and attended to! What a deuce! must a man be always writing?

Fie upon me, for taking the first sheet of paper that came to hand: I am come to the end of it already; and how much unsaid!—I have no room to add more, than that I am your, &c.

LETTER LXV.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

London, Sept. 19, 1757.

I WRITE, my dear miss Highmore, in gratitude, in fear, in love, in hope, in pain. In gratitude—for your favour to me of Sept. 6th, and to thank good Mrs. God—ll, through your hands, for her kind remembrance of me.

In fear—of hurting your good papa, who grudges me the favour of so kindly-long a letter from you (the thanks I got for communicating it to him), by doing offence to your eyes:

—but a little bit of jealousy in his fear, for all that, lest any should, by accident, receive from you a letter one line longer than any one of those you wrote to himself. What will he do, if you should take heart at last, and marry, and your husband be sometimes distant from you!

In love—because I cannot help it, if I would; and take delight in the account you give of that health, and serenity of mind, which I pray may ever attend you.

In pain—because I cannot pour out my heart as glibly as usual, or rather as formerly to my beloved friends, when I paid my duty to them on paper, by reason of paralytic and failing fingers, when that heart is as sincerely theirs as ever.

In hope—(I had like to have forgot that, having so little left for myself) that you and all you love, if that be possible, continue always as happy, with some necessary variations, however, to keep the pool of life from stagnating, as you describe yourself to be at the penning of the letter before me.

Hush! hush! hush! dear Mr. Highmore! No such thing, as the above particularization, being an infallible sign of a long answer. I will be brief in the rest, for your sake; and also for my own; though once I loved to prattle to this dear girl.

I am delighted with your account of your studies, your pursuits, your diversions, and with those of the more athletic of your own sex with you, mentioned by you with so much advantage to them all.

"Your well-furnished library," amusement equally entertaining and instructive!

"Henry and Francis;" of all books of the kind?—That it has been read by Mrs. ——— is recommendation with numbers! Mrs. Montague, lady Bradshaigh, miss Highmore. Well, I'll take it up again, and try to like it better than I did, when I dipped into it last. No one has a higher opinion of these names, and of Mrs. D——'s judgment, than I.

"My opinion of Mr. Gray's Odes?" You know I admire the author. I have heard that you and Mr. G—— have both studied them together, and have found out all their beauties. I have no doubt but they are numberless—but indeed have not had head clear enough to read them more than once, as yet. But from you I expect the result of Mr. G——'s studies and discoveries on the subject, as also your marginal notes; which will not, I hope, be too severe, &c.—Why that caution to me, my miss Highmore? I am glad I did not say all I said to lady B—— about Henry and Francis.

"And then comes the kindly felicitating subject;" to which I directed Patty to answer.—She did, I hope.

And there, Mr. Highmore, is an end, I hope, of your tender solicitude for the eyes of our dear girl, on my account, for the present!

Excuse bad writing, interlining, &c.—"Was it not always bad?" Yes; but never so bad as now. Repeated respects to Mrs. God—ll. I am, &c.

LETTER LXVI.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

Sept. 27, 1754.

I THANK you, dear sir, for your tender concern, good wishes, and hearty prayer for my worthy friend, Mr. Tickell. I have the satisfaction to assure you, his late disorder has not so greatly impaired his strength, nor sunk his spirits to that miserably low state, which his over-anxious mother's fear made her apprehend. God be praised, she is comforted, by a hopeful appearance of her beloved son's perfect recovery. He is pretty well in health, at present, thank God.

I protest I am at a loss how to answer some parts of your last obliging favour. Give me leave to say, you have more good nature, humility, and patience, than any other man upon earth, or you certainly are the greatest hypocrite under the sun. If I could suspect Mr. Richardson's veracity, I should look upon your submission to my inferior judgment as a polite piece of complaisance. I begin to fear you think me too peremptory, and self-sufficient; if so, you resolve, perhaps, to acquiesce, rather than contend, with a positive woman. You are extremely indulgent, and I ought to thank you for every favourable allowance you afford me, who have not any of that delightful, spirited wit, and charming vein of humour, which plead excuse for not quite right things in lady B——.

Mrs. Belfour has given you a right notion of this mad-cap, and I could tales unfold; but—I never could manage her; nor will I have any more boxing bouts with madam ——. If our favourite charming Harriet cannot make this sprightly lady blush a little, at her unreasonable aversion, or, at least, silence her exclamation against old maids, I pronounce her incurable.

The worthy maiden you mention is an honourable woman. I really believe I was fond of this good-natured aunt Catherine before I could speak. Lady B—— is as well acquainted with her real worth; but I will not tell all I know, because you are sufficiently informed already. I most sincerely love this ungovernable lady B——; we always were affectionate sisters, although her over-hasty disposition did not altogether please my graver turn. She has been blest with constant good health, and, thank God, she still enjoys that great blessing. I ever was, and am, less happy in this respect; and yet this lady B——, with her high health, and a continual flow of fine spirits, never was active in using necessary exercise: that neglect is attended with a consequence which gives me concern; because it renders her incapable of using that exercise which I think needful for preserving health. I cannot help pitying a human creature, loaded with fat; it ever was my endeavour to guard against that heavy condition; and I am very thankful that I can reap benefit and pleasure from my nimble feet, and a trotting horse.

After much ado about nothing, let me assure you, sir, I have more than the shadow of an inclination to oblige you. I willingly comply with your request. Pray, dear sir, call not the fragment, you desire to peruse, the amended History of Clarissa. I have only attempted to alter particular parts abruptly. It is, in short, a medley. I told you I had weakly endeavoured to imitate. No matter what I intended by some foolish things, thrown amongst the heap—if you can read it, you shall.

After scribbling this long epistle, I have not fully, I think, answered your last letter. Here is enough, however, to try your patience; allow me, at present, to subscribe myself your obliged, &c.

LETTER LXVII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.

October 10, 1754.

ALLOW me to congratulate your ladyship on Mr. Tickell's amendment, and the prospect of his perfect recovery. I join with you, madam, to bless God for it.

Lady Bradshaigh acquaints me, that she, as well as your ladyship, meets with persons who quarrel with Sir Charles Grandison. They are welcome. A good character is a gauntlet thrown out. As some apprehend it reflects upon themselves,

they perhaps think they have a right to be affronted. The character of a mere mortal cannot, ought not, to be quite perfect. It is sufficient, if its errors be not premeditated, wilful, and unrepented of: and I shall rejoice if there be numbers of those who find fault with the more perfect characters in the piece because of their errors, and who would be themselves above being guilty of the like in the same situation. Many things are thrown out in the several characters, on purpose to provoke friendly debate; and perhaps as trials of the reader's judgment, manners, taste, and capacity. I have often sat by in company, and been silently pleased with the opportunity given me, by different arguers, of looking into the hearts of some of them, through windows, that at other times have been close shut up. This is an advantage that will always be given by familiar writing, and by characters drawn from common life. A living author, who succeeds tolerably, will have more enemies than a dead one. A time will come, and perhaps it is not far off, when the writer of certain moral pieces will meet with better quarter from his very censurers. His obscurity—a man in business pretending to draw characters for warning to one set of people; for instruction to another: Presumptuous!—But enough of this subject. I ought to be, and am, abundantly satisfied with the kind reception given to what I have obtruded upon the world in a new light, and in the approbation of many truly pious and good.

Your ladyship is at a loss, you say, to answer some parts of my last letter. You are pleased to magnify my patience and humility: For what?—For having a great opinion of your judgment, and for inviting your correction. "Either (you say) I have more good-nature than any man on earth, or am certainly the greatest hypocrite under the sun." From the knowledge I hope I have of my own heart, with that whole heart I disclaim hypocrisy, the lowest of all vices, ingratitude excepted. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; and can it require any great degree of patience to hear characters blamed that were not intended to be perfect? What battles have your beloved sister and I fought? She has reason to blame me for my rusticity, rather than for my yielding.

Your ladyship "could tales unfold." I hope lady B—— will *not* be quiet, that you may be provoked to unfold them. I am particularly glad that your ladyship has not the dislike to a certain class of females, whom that lady is so fond of satirizing. O! how I have used her on this occasion! She can hardly forbear; but just touches them now, and away. I think I have made her half afraid. But this miss Do—Let us join forces, madam, against this miss Do. There is not a better lady on earth than your sister when miss Do is out of the way. Strange! that so excellent a lady as lady B—— (your ladyship's sister) should be so misled by such a flirt as miss Do.—Yet, not so very strange neither: for, I know not how it is, but I myself, though I could sometimes beat miss Do, see something to be pleased with in that lively girl. Favour me, dear madam, with the history of this young lady, and her airs, that I may either like her more or less. I am sure she must have some good qualities, or she could never have had such an interest in the heart of a sister of lady Echlin.

O that I could have the honour to see you two dear sisters under my happy roof! Lady B—— gives me hope, that she will be in London this winter. Then would your ladyship and I, if there were occasion, join; but there would be no occasion. She would be all goodness. Miss Do would not be with her. She never

once, in the visits she honoured me with, when last in town, brought that girl with her. She only is her companion in her closet or dressing-room; and now and then writes a paragraph for her there. And my lady is, in her absence, so mild, so meek! Bless us, madam, you cannot think how mild! how meek! And I am so awkward, for not seeing any thing reprovable in her, yet remembering many flightinesses in her writing, that I know not how to behave myself to her.

A thousand thanks to your ladyship for your kind compliance with my request to be entrusted with your papers on the History of Clarissa. When? By what way will they come? I was in hopes that the permission and notice of the transmission would have been given in the same letter. They shall be very safe when they arrive, and attend your ladyship's commands in the return.

I have written to Mr. Skelton. Let me entreat your acceptance of his Discourses from me. Your ladyship would greatly oblige me if you could inform me of any thing I or mine could do here to give you pleasure. I am, &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

July 31, 1757.

Dear sir,

I KNOW you are inclined to judge favourably, and naturally disposed to pity the afflicted: I therefore doubt not your making a reasonable allowance, nor your having tender compassion for me, when I assure you my long silence hath been occasioned by a woeful misfortune, which sorely afflicts my heart. I cannot describe what my anxious mind suffered between slender hope and tormenting fear, before a melancholy event made me a sorrowful widow. Indeed, sir, I have lost a tender husband; a very worthy, valuable man. No wonder I am bitterly afflicted for such a lamentable loss: but I endeavour to moderate my grief by considering it is my duty to submit patiently to the will of God. Almighty Wisdom, seeing what was best, and good for us, has punished me deservedly; and under this trial let me be thankful, that I have not the least doubt of my dear husband being happily released from a miserable state of health. A blessed change it was for him, who endured a long and painful illness with exemplary patience and resignation; contented to live or die, as it pleased God Almighty. No mortal ever quitted this life with more apparent tranquillity. The last sad scene, so distressing to me, was not unhappy to him, I am sure; and that is my consolation. Excuse me, dear sir, troubling you with my groans. I shall add a few lines more concerning my present condition; for I cannot help telling you, my dear departed friend hath testified his respect and dependence on a faithful wife, by appointing me sole executrix; and I am also guardian to his only nephew, who inherits his good uncle's estate and title. I am as anxious for this young man's welfare as if he were my own child: and his uncle and I have been parents to him from the hour he was born. This boy's father died several months before the child came into the world; and his mournful mother, overwhelmed with grief, expired immediately after the birth of her son. An infant, thus deprived of both father and mother, is a most pitiable case; but he has not been an unhappy orphan; and I heartily wish my great loss may not prove a greater misfortune to him. At his early time of life, in such circumstances, and in such a libertine age, a boy under seventeen is in a dangerous situation. God give him

grace to make a right use of an uncommon good understanding. He is a fine hopeful youth at present; has had a private education, not to his disadvantage in any respect; and I hope to see him a sober and serious student at Oxford, please God we live. Some people would be apt to think me impertinent, and perhaps would say, What is all this to me?—but Mr. Richardson, I know, is not such a man.

I have seen Mr. Sheridan here lately; he appeared to be in pretty good spirits; but I think he cannot be tolerably happy, unless he quits the slavish management, which does not better either his health or fortune. The little wonder was quite a new scene to him; he admires the romantic situation greatly: but, alas! it does not afford me pleasure as usual; Villarusa is not what it was: all appears dull and gloomy in my tearful eye, though I do labour to recover my spirits.

I shall rejoice to hear you enjoy such a state of health as is sincerely wished and prayed for by, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXIX.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.

August 12, 1757.

MOST heartily do I condole with your ladyship on your very great loss; and should have presumed to do it before, had I not been myself so ill in the nervous way, that for some time I was unable to write; and had I not at other times considered, that any thing I could offer by way of consolation for so heavy a deprivation, to so good a Christian and so pious a heart, would be needless; and that time, the pacifier of *every woe*, could only, by God's grace, alleviate *yours*. Nor did I doubt, that your good sister, and your favoured bishop, would be ready to pour the balm of Christian comfort into the wounds of your mind.

I congratulate you, madam, on the resignation and pious departure of the gentleman you so tenderly loved. What pleasure must this give, on reflection, to such a mind as yours! How much ought this reflection to alleviate the pangs that will accompany it on the loss you have so recently sustained!

Your Villarusa will be again your Villarusa to you; but time must have first mellowed your affliction. A journey to England will perhaps be of use to you: to Oxford, so much in the way of your new duty; to Lancashire, receiving from, and giving comfort to, beloved relations there; to London, perhaps in company of those dear relations, and to a beloved daughter and her young family, and other friends. [May I have the honour to be one in the list?] Then, after all these duties paid, and inclinations gratified, will your Villarusa appear to you with new charms; nor will a tender sigh and silent tear to the memory of the dear departed, in that little wonder, diminish, but rather exalt, the joys of your meditation.

God Almighty sanctify to your ladyship your present affliction, is a prayer put up by all mine, as well as by, madam, your, &c.

LETTER LXX.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

Rook Hermitage, Nov. 10. 1757.

Dear sir,

ACCEPT my grateful thanks, for your last obliging favour. "Time," as you observe, "is the pacifier of every woe," with God's assistance; and time may mellow my affliction. But very sure I am, deep-wounding grief is incurable on this side the

grave. "Villarusa will again be Villarusa to me," you say. No, sir, that is impossible! This house, these admired improvements, this country, never more can be agreeable to me. If God Almighty permits me to see my native country, it is probable I shall not return again to Ireland. And yet, I am so attached to my hermitage, I feel unwilling to quit that bewitching little cell. When my sorrowful days came, the little wonder was, and is, a wonderful recreation to me; and thankful I am, that this innocent, retired amusement serves to unbend my mind. I wish Mr. Richardson could see me in that romantic situation, seated on the mid-rock, the briny flood flowing within a few yards of my feet. Don't be alarmed, good sir; you may venture to sit by me; it is not Shakspeare's dangerous mid-rock.

I am glad you call my freedom kind; but cannot allow that it is in the least condescending to acquaint Mr. Richardson with my affairs; nor should he, who so justly merits esteem, doubt his "being one" in the short "list" of my most valuable friends; one on whom I could rely, and repose a fearless confidence. Although we are not personally acquainted, surely there is friendship subsisting between us; and if I do ever reach Old England, I trust my honoured friend "may live to see the day."

I hope my young man will not disappoint my expectation of his settling at the university; but I dare not be oversure of any thing in this uncertain world.

I must tell you, sir, our good bishop gives me hopes of seeing him in Great Britain; and I hope you may see that agreeable day. This excellent prelate has been particularly kind to his unseen admirer, under affliction; not been sparing "to pour the balm of Christian comfort:" nothing is wanting but a wished-for visit from Patmos. But why should I expect such a compliment? His lordship, in every letter to me, mentions Mr. Richardson with great regard. I told him you had been so much indisposed in the nervous way, that for some time you were not able to write. He answered, "Not able to write! alas! that great genius! then I must not trouble the good man with a temptation to write to me."

I beg my respects to Mrs. Richardson and to your daughters, with grateful thanks to you and them for that kind concern and pious remembrance, which will always be duly acknowledged by, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXXI.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.

Dec. 3. 1757.

You charm me, madam, with your description of your rock hermitage. What a sweet retirement must it be, as you have improved it! "The little wonder (you tell me) in your more thoughtful hours was, and still is, a wonderful recreation to you; and that you are thankful (I am sure you are for every relief) that this innocent, retired amusement serves to unbend your mind." And does your ladyship wish, that I "could see you in that romantic situation, seated on the mid-rock, the briny flood flowing within a few yards of your feet? Don't be alarmed, sir (add you, most condescendingly); you may venture to sit by me; it is not Shakspeare's dangerous mid-rock."

What would I give for a sketch of this sweet hermitage, and of the wonders round it, and in prospect from it? With what delight should I place it near the picture of the house at Haigh, which I was allowed upon my own terms (as this must be) to take a copy of; your beloved sister's and sir Roger's figures in it, meditating the

beauties of the situation! May I not hope, dear madam, to be so indulged? Is there not in your knowledge some young artist, that, on my account, could be so employed? Let me have in constant view the sweet, the "bewitching little cell, which so attaches to it the heart of good lady Echlin, which she feels so unwilling to quit; which is, in her deeper meditation, a wonderful recreation to her, and serves to unbend her mind, and in which she condescends to wish I could see her."

Your ladyship bids me hope for the pleasure of seeing you in England. I should have the more joy on such a wished-for occasion, as I think the change of scene must be of consolation and diversion to you; and as you must give and receive so much delight to and from such near and dear relations as you have here; and the rather as you are of opinion that Villarusa, consolatory as it is at times to you, can never be all that it once was to you.

If the land and sea views I am a petitioner for, with your sweet hermitage, cannot be conveniently granted, a sketch in Indian ink, or black lead, on vellum, would delight me, hanging before me in view of your dear sister's and sir Roger's Haigh. Still, my dear lady, either way, on my own terms.

God bless your young gentleman, your ward! May he answer all your pious cares and wishes. Your, &c.

LETTER LXXII.

Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson.

Dear sir,

You ask, "How can I find time for so much reading," &c.? Those who are not obliged to attend to any particular business, have nothing to do but to look for time, and they are sure to find it. But there are those, who sit with their eyes shut, and let it pass unobserved, through wilfulness or negligence. No wonder such do not find time.

O you—you—you worse than ill-natured! How could you rip up the old story of traversing the Park! How could you delight to tear the tender skin off an old wound that never will be quite healed! I was hurt more than you could be. My pain was in the mind; yours only bodily. Did not you forgive me? However (behold the wax I am made of!) the latter end of this paragraph melts and disarms my intended anger: for the present only; for I shall find farther matter for quarrel, I foresee.

The first time my friend saw your picture he asked, "What honest face have you got there?" And, without staying for an answer, "Do you know, I durst trust that man with my life, without farther knowledge of him." I answered, "I do know you might do so with safety; and I put you down for a judge of physiognomy."

As I sit at my writing-desk, I cannot look up without viewing your picture; and I had some hopes the looking upon it, as I writ, might a little have restrained, or at least kept me within bounds. I have tried the experiment, when I have been upon the edge of a ranting humour, and heard myself whisper, "What! with that smiling face?" and found I was encouraged rather than restrained; so gave you a familiar nod, and ranted on, as I do now, without fear or wit.

I only meant to joke a little upon Dr. Young, not to be severe. If it has that appearance, pray let him not have it; for he might think me very impertinent. He pretends to be serious upon this.

Dec. 27.—I have, since I wrote to you last, stumbled into Dr. Middleton on the *Miraculous Powers;* and,

in truth, I do not like him. Perhaps I do not understand him. But to me he appears a caviller at immaterial points. And I doubt he may do more harm by the controversy he has occasioned, than he can do good by endeavouring to prove many pretended miracles to be either fabulous or the effects of priestcraft. But, seriously, I must own he has lessened these ancients greatly in my opinion; for, what can be said in favour of their countenancing so many impositions as it plainly appears they did? It is but making a poor compliment to Christianity to say it wanted such gross abuses to strengthen and propagate it. And though, to the rational and well-judging, it shines the clearer for having struggled through and shaken off these clogs of absurdities; yet its appearing in its native excellence is not owing to those, through whose hands it was transmitted to us.

You see, sir, I write upon every subject to you, without considering whether proper or not: but I know, if I am wrong, you will inform me.

Dec. 28.—I should be greatly delighted to see the correspondence between you and the young lady you mention. Sometime or other I hope to be favoured with it.

I own I do not approve of great learning in women. I believe it rarely turns out to their advantage. No farther would I have them to advance than to what would enable them to write and converse with ease and propriety, and make themselves useful in every stage of life. I hate to hear Latin out of a woman's mouth. There is something in it, to me, masculine. I could fancy such an one weary of the petticoat, and talking over a bottle. You say, "the men are hastening apace into dictionary learning." The less occasion still for the ladies to proceed in theirs. I should be ashamed of having more learning than my husband. And could we, do you think, help showing a little contempt, finding ourselves superior in what the husband ought to excel in? Very few women have strength of brain equal to such a trial; and as few men would forego their lordly prerogative, and submit to a woman of better understanding, either natural or acquired, a very uncomfortable life do I see between an ignorant husband and a learned wife. Not that I would have it thought unnecessary for a woman to read, to spell, or speak English; which has been pretty much the case, hitherto. I often wonder we can converse at all; much more, that we can write to be understood. Thanks to nature for what we have! We have, there, an advantage over your sex. You are in the right to keep us in ignorance. You dare not let us try what we could do. In that you show your judgment, which I acknowledge to be much stronger than ours, by nature, and that is all you have to boast of, and a little courage, which is oftener shown upon a principle of false honour, than from an innate, true bravery.

My employments and amusements at this time of the year are so much the same round, though not disagreeable to me, that they are scarce worth committing to paper, except as you desire it. I rise about seven, sometimes sooner; after my private duties, I read or write till nine, then breakfast; work, and converse with my company till about twelve; then, if the weather permit, walk a mile in the garden; dress, and read till dinner; after which, sit and chat till four: from that to the hour of tea-drinking, each day, variety of employments. You know what the men say enters with the tea-table; though I will venture to declare, if mine is not an exception, it is as near one as you can imagine.

Here books take place, which I often read to the company; and some-

times we all have our particular studies (sir Roger always has his), which we seldom forsake till the bell warns to supper; after which we have always something to do. We eat fruit, crack nuts, perhaps jokes; now and then music takes place. This is our regular scheme, though it is often broken into, with company and variety of incidents, some pleasing, some otherwise; domestic affairs, too, call for a share of one's time. I know not what the fine ladies mean, when they complain of having too much time; for, I thank God, Barnaby Bright is not too long for me. How should I be despised in the parish of St. James's, if they were to know that, at this time, I glory in the humble title of a cow-doctor! But no matter; if I can do good, I can bear their contempt, and return it to them with interest.

I am afraid, sir, I have given you too much trouble about the poor Magdalen. She is only qualified to wait upon an unmarried lady, or one who has a house-keeper, for she understands nothing of house-keeping; but, where needle-work, dressing, and getting up fine linen, are required, I believe she would give satisfaction.

I wish to heaven, with you, sir, that you could, as I do, make time, or that I could give you some of mine. I want only power to send you a present, which I would allow you to call bountiful. It should be another box —a contrast to Pandora's. Time, health, and happiness, should it contain, and these only as leaders to a greater treasure: for in the bottom, you should find a plain though distant prospect of eternal bliss. But, though I am poor in power, accept it in sincerest wishes from, good Mr. Richardson, your, &c.

LETTER LXXIII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

Dear madam,

You do not approve of great learning in women. Learning in women may be either rightly or wrongly placed, according to the uses made of it by them. And if the sex is to be brought up with a view to make the individuals of it inferior in knowledge to the husbands they may happen to have, not knowing who those husbands are, or what, or whether sensible or foolish, learned or illiterate, it would be best to keep them from writing and reading, and even from the knowledge of the common idioms of speech. Would it not be very pretty for parents on both sides to make it the first subject of their inquiries, whether the girl, as a recommendation, were a greater fool, or more ignorant, than the young fellow; and if not, that they should reject her, for the booby's sake?—and would not your objection stand as strongly against a preference in mother-wit in the girl as against what is called learning; since linguists (I will not call all linguists learned men) do very seldom make the figure in conversation that even girls, from sixteen to twenty, make.

If a woman has genius, let it take its course, as well as in men; provided she neglect not any thing that is more peculiarly her province. If she has good sense, she will not make the man she chooses, who wants her knowledge, uneasy, nor despise him for that want: her good sense will teach her what is her duty: nor will she want reminding of the tenor of her marriage-vow to him. If she has not, she will find a thousand ways to plague him, though she knew not one word beyond her mother-tongue, nor how to write, read, or speak properly in that. The English, madam, and particularly what we call the

plain English, is a very copious and a very expressive language.

But, dear madam, does what you say in the first part of the paragraph under my eye, limiting the genius of women, quite cohere with the advantages which, in the last part, you tell me they have over us?—"Men do well," you say, "to keep women in ignorance:" but this is not generally intended to be the case, I believe. Girls, I think you formerly said, were compounded of brittle materials.—They are not, they cannot be, trusted to be sent abroad to seminaries of learning, as men are. It is necessary that they should be brought up to a knowledge of the domestic duties. A young man's learning-time is from ten to twenty-five, more or less. At fifteen or sixteen, a girl starts into woman; and then she throws her purveying eyes about her: and what is the learning she is desirous to obtain? Dear lady, discourage not the sweet souls from acquiring any learning that may keep them employed, and out of mischief, and that may divert them from attending to the whisperings within them, and to the flatteries without them, till they have taken in a due quantity of ballast, that may hinder them, all their sails unfurled and streamers flying, from being overset at their first entrance upon the voyage of life.

I am charmed with your ladyship's obliging account of your daily employments and amusements. Now do I know at what different parts of the day to obtrude myself. I was not very well this morning. My people neglected me. I was at Haigh in half a second, and did myself the honour of breakfasting there; but became the more miserable for it; for O, how I missed you, on my re-transportation!—yet I the sooner recovered myself when I looked up to you and to your dear sir Roger, in the picture.—Yet the piercing cold, and the surrounding snow, and my hovered-over fireside, reminded me, that the piece before me was but a picture. In summer, if it please God to spare me till then, it will be more than a picture. I will then throw myself into your morning walks; and sometimes, perhaps, you shall find me perched upon one of your pieces of ruins, symbolically to make the ruin still more complete. In hopes of which, I am, &c.

LETTER LXXIV.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

But what a sad thing, say you, my dear lady, that these sober men will not put on the appearance of rakes! Silly creatures! when they know what would do!—Can't they learn to curse and swear in jest? and be good, and true, and faithful, just when a lady wants them to be good, and true, and faithful!—But you would be content, if the good men would dress, only dress, like rakes.—But hold! On looking back to your ladyship's letter, I find the words dress and address: "The good man need only to assume the dress and address of the rake, and you will wager ten to four that he will be preferred to him." Will you be pleased, madam, to give me particulars of the taking dress of a rake? Will you be pleased to describe the address with which the ladies in general shall be taken!—The rake is, must be, generally, in dress a coxcomb; in address, a man of great assurance; thinking highly of himself, meanly of the sex; he must be past blushing, and laugh at those who are not. He must flatter, lie, laugh, sing, caper, be a monkey, and not a man. And can a good man put on these appearances? We have heard that the devil has transformed himself into an angel of light, to bring about his purposes; but never that an angel of light borrowed a coat and waistcoat of the devil, for

any purpose whatever. And must the good man thus debase himself, to stand well with the fair sex?

"To reform Lovelace for Clarissa's sake!"—Excellent ladies!—Unbounded charity!—Dear souls! How I love your six forgiving charmers!—But they acknowledge this, I hope, only among themselves!—If there are any Lovelaces of their acquaintance, I hope they give not to them such an indirect invitation to do their worst, in order to give themselves an opportunity to exercise one of the brightest graces of a Christian.

Well, but, for fear I should be called scurrilous again, let me see how your ladyship explains yourself.—"A man may DESERVE the name of a rake, without being QUITE an *abandoned profligate;* as a man may sometimes drink A LITTLE TOO MUCH, without being *a sot.*"

And, were I to attempt to draw a good man, are these, madam, the outlines of his character? Must he be a moderate rake?—Must he qualify himself for the ladies' favour by taking any liberties that are criminal? only taking care that he stop at a few; "that he be not QUITE an *abandoned profligate;* that though he may now and then drink a little too much, yet that he stop short of the SOT!"—O, my dear lady Bradshaigh—and am I scurrilous for saying, that there is no such thing, at least that it is very difficult, so to draw a good man, that he may be thought agreeable to the ladies in general?

Did I ever tell you, madam, of the contention I had with Mr. Cibber, about the character of a good man, which he undertook to draw, and to whom, at setting out, he gave a mistress, in order to show the virtue of his hero in parting with her, when he had fixed upon a particular lady, to whom he made honourable addresses? A male-virgin! said he—ha, ha, ha, hah! when I made my objections to the mistress, and she was another man's wife too, but ill used by her husband; and he laughed me quite out of countenance!—And it was but yesterday, in company, some of which he never was in before, that he was distinguishing upon a moderate rake (though not one word has he seen or heard of your ladyship's letter or notion), by urging, that men might be criminal without being censurable!—a doctrine that he had no doubt about, and to which he declared that none but divines and prudes would refuse to subscribe to!—Bless me, thought I!—and is this knowing the world?—What an amiable man was Mr. B——, in Pamela, in this light!

But I have this comfort, upon the whole, that I find the good man's character is not impracticable; and I think Mr. Cibber, if I can have weight with him, shall undertake the arduous task. He is as gay and as lively at seventy-nine as he was at twenty-nine; and he is a sober man, who has seen a great deal, and always dressed well, and was noted for his address, and for his success too, on two hundred and fifty occasions,—a little too many, I doubt, for a moderate rake: but then his long life must be considered. I wish we could fix upon the number of times a man might be allowed to be overcome with wine, without being thought a sot. Once a week? Once a fortnight? Once a month? How shall we put it? Youth will have its follies. Why—but I will not ask the question I was going to ask, lest I should provoke your ladyship beyond your strength.

Dear, dear madam, let me beg of you to make your own virtuous sentiments and behaviour in life, which render you equally loved and revered by all who have the honour to know you, the standard of virtue for all your sex. When you extend your charity too far, and allow for what

is, rather than insist upon what should be, in cases of duty and of delicacy, my love for the sex makes me apply to your ladyship's words—"you provoke me beyond my strength."

Just this moment came in my wife.—(Thursday morning, eleven.)—"O, Betsy," said I, "begone! Ask me not what I am writing; I have been cutting your dear lady all to pieces."—"Dear good lady!" said she; "never will I forgive you, then." Then looking at you over the chimney, with an eye of love, and my eye following hers, "You can be but in jest," said she! "Pray make my best compliments to her ladyship, and to her sir Roger." With which I conclude, &c.

LETTER LXXV.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

North-End, Dec. 26, 1751.

EVER obliging lady Bradshaigh! And was it, could it be, five weeks, almost six, before I paid my duty to my dearest correspondent?—How proud do you make me by your reproaches! You tell me you are angry with me! the first time I have been able to make you so.—Yet, sweet bee of Hybla! how you sting, when you tell me, that you suppose I would make no excuses for my long silence, because I would not allow of white fibs in myself!—O, my lady! how could you, and in the same sentence in which you were gracious? but how can I cry out, though hurt, when I revolve the friendly, the condescending, the indulgent motive?

You have seen in the papers, I suppose, that our friend is married; may he be happy! most cordially I wish for it: not only because he is our friend, but because he is our fellow creature. "Much depends upon the lady; and common sense will not be sufficient to make him so.—She must have sense enough to make him see, that she thinks him her superior in sense," as you once told me. Proud mortal! and vain.—And cannot he be content with the greater pride, as a man of sense would think it, to call a richer jewel than he had before, his, while he is all his own!—But, such is the nature of woman, if she be not a vixen indeed, that if the man sets out right with her; if he lets her early know, that he is her lord, and that she is but his vassal; and that he has a stronger sense of his prerogative than of her merit and beauty; she will succumb: and, after a few struggles, a few tears, will make him a more humble, a more passive wife, for his insolent bravery, and high opinion of himself. I am sorry to say it; but I have too often observed, that fear, as well as love, is necessary on the lady's part, to make wedlock happy; and it will generally do it, if the man sets out with asserting his power and her dependence. And now will your ladyship rise upon me! I expect it. And yet you have yourself allowed the case to be thus, with regard to this husband and his wife.

The struggle would be only at first: and if a man would be obstinate, a woman would be convinced, or seem to be so, and very possibly think the man more a man for his tyranny, and value herself when he condescended to praise or smile upon her.

I have as good a wife as man need to wish for. I believe your ladyship thinks so.—Yet—shall I say, O madam! women love not King Logs!—The dear creature, without intending contradiction, is a mistress of it. She is so good as to think me, among men, a tolerably sensible one; but that is only in general; for, if we come to particulars, she will always put me right, by the superiority of her own understanding. But I am even with her very often. And how,

do you ask, madam? why, by giving up my will to hers; and then the honest soul is puzzled what (in a doubtful case) to resolve upon. And, in mere pity to her puzzlings, I have let her know my wishes; and then at once she resolves, by doing the very contrary to what she thinks them to be. And here again, I am now and then, but not often, too hard for her.—And how?—You guess, my lady.—Need I say, that it is by proposing the very contrary to what I wish;—but so much for King Log and his frog. How apt are we to bring in our own feelings, by head and shoulders, as the saying is, when we are led to it by cases either similar or opposite to our own!

But one word more of the gentleman, if you please. He may already, if not confoundedly tired of beauty (sameness is a confounded thing to a lover of variety), be growing prudent: since I am told that he begins to think of retiring somewhere, in order to save expense.

I was sure your ladyship would be pleased with the generosity of my hero, as shown in the two letters I sent you. You blame me for not thinking of publishing in my lifetime. You deny me assistance: you depend upon the poor old woman's blinking light; yet I wish I had had the flash of your torch to light me. If in boisterous weather a flambeau will not stand it, what can a rush-light do?

Your ladyship asks me if I would publish, if my writing ladies would give me each a letter. "Remember," say you, "that we have you in our power." Well, madam! then you will allow me to stop till you do.

Tell you sincerely, which do I think, upon the whole, men or women, have the greatest trials of patience, and which bears them the best? You mean, you say, from one sex to the other only?—What a question is here! Which? why women, to be sure. Man is an animal that must bustle in the world, go abroad, converse, fight battles, encounter other dangers of seas, winds, and I know not what, in order to protect, provide for, maintain in ease and plenty, women. Bravery, anger, fierceness, occasionally, are made familiar to them. They buffet, and are buffeted by the world; are impatient and uncontrollable. They talk of honour, and run their heads against stone walls, to make good their pretensions to it; and often quarrel with one another, and fight duels, upon any other silly thing that happens to raise their choler; with their shadows, if you please.

While women are meek, passive, good creatures, who, used to stay at home, set their maids at work, and formerly themselves—get their houses in order, to receive, comfort, oblige, give joy to, their fierce, fighting, bustling, active protectors, providers, maintainers—divert him with pretty pug's tricks, tell him soft tales of love, and of who and who's together, and what has been done in his absence—bring to him little master, so like his own dear papa; and little pretty miss, a soft, sweet, smiling soul, with her sampler in her hand, so like what her meek mamma was at her years! And with these differences in education, nature, employments, your ladyship asks, whether the man or the woman bears more from each other? has the more patience? Dearest lady! how can you be so severe upon your own sex, yet seem to persuade yourself that you are defending them!

What you say of a lover's pressing his mistress to a declaration of her love for him, is sweetly pretty, and very just; but let a man press as he will, if the lady answers him rather by her obliging manners than in words, she will leave herself something to declare, and she will find herself rather more than less respected for it: such is the nature of

man!—A man hardly ever presumes to press a lady to make this declaration, but when he thinks himself sure of her. He urges her, therefore, to add to his own consequence; and hopes to quit scores with her, when he returns love for love, and favour for favour; and thus "draws the tender-hearted soul to professions, which she is often upbraided for all her life after," says your ladyship. But these must be the most ungenerous of men. All I would suppose is, that pride and triumph is the meaning of the urgency for a declaration, which pride and triumph make a man think unnecessary; and perhaps to know how far he may go, and be within allowed compass. A woman, who is brought to own her love to the man, must act accordingly towards him; must be more indulgent to him; must, in a word, abate of her own significance, and add to his. And have you never seen a man strut upon the occasion, and how tame and bashful a woman looks after she has submitted to make the acknowledgment? The behaviour of each to the other, upon it and after it, justifies the caution to the sex, which I would never have a woman forget—always to leave to herself the power of granting something: yet her denials may be so managed as to be more attractive than her compliances. Women, Lovelace says (and he pretends to know them), are fond of ardours; but there is an end of them when a lover is secure. He can then look about him, and be occasionally, if not indifferent, unpunctual, and delight in being missed, expected, and called to tender account for his careless absences: and he will be less and less solicitous about giving good reasons for them, as she is more and more desirous of his company. Poor fool! he has brought her to own that she loves him: and will she not bear with the man she loves? She, herself, as I have observed, will think she must act consistently with her declaration; and he will plead that declaration in his favour, let his neglects or slights be what they will. Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXVI.

Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson.

January 3, 1752.

I HOPE I shall never be more angry with my valuable correspondent than I appeared to be in my last letter; though you love to make me angry, and you know how vindictive a heart I have: therefore do not provoke me too far. Remember, a woman is never behind-hand in revenge; and how do you think I mean to complete it? even by keeping my temper. If that does not vex you, I know nothing that will.

You ask, "how could I sting, and be so gracious in the same sentence?" Why, because I expected something in answer that would please me, and I was not disappointed. May I never want a sting to draw such honey from your pen.

Can I, do I, "engage your delight with your attention?" May I ever do so; and I will take upon me to say, I shall never owe you a grain on that score.

Do you really think, sir, that "prerogative from your sex to ours, early exerted in the married state, will sink most women into mere humble, passive wives?" How is this, "if he sets out right?"—Right! right! do you call it? Much depends upon the various tempers on both sides. Without being a vixen, indeed, a woman may behave with dignity and with duty, and, at the same time, despise the man who is mean enough to remind her of his prerogative, and that she is his vas—What is the ugly word?—I do not

understand it.—Why will you write Greek to the unlearned? And ignorant I may remain; for the man, whose happy wife I am, as he never has explained it, would not willingly do it, were I to ask him. Insolent bravery, however, is plain English, and very properly applied. You have "too often observed (too often indeed, if ever) that fear as well as love is necessary, on the lady's part, to make wedlock happy." I deny not that you may have observed, that a man, by setting out right or wrong, by insolent bravery, and a high opinion of himself, may make fear necessary: nevertheless, it is a necessity of his own creating, and not from the nature of woman.

What would have become of me, had I married a man, who would have endeavoured to lay me under that necessity? Endeavoured I say; for the bravest and the most insolent of your insolent sex could never have brought me to it. I am such a vixen, that if I loved my husband, I could not fear him. A governor, a parent, a master, I could love, fear, and honour, at the same time; but to my husband, myself, I must be all love, no mixture of fear; certain hatred would attend it.

How can it be said what would be the way with most women? Where there are variety of tempers, there ought to be, and you have the power to use, variety of methods. But prerogative is the word, and insolence the motive; whilst we have no choice; submission, submission for ever, or we are vixens, perverse opposers, rebels to our sovereigns, to our tyrants—too often synonymous terms. And yet, I will so far allow your observation, that some of us do seem to submit with pleasure to these sovereigns: but then, in my way of thinking, it must be a submission of love, to be called happy in the least degree; not a dispirited fear, like a ——What is the meaning of that Greek word? I have a notion it is something like servitude: O, ay: "Love, serve, honour, and obey." No fear, though, is mentioned; thank God for that; since, if there had, I should certainly have broke my marriage vow, one way or the other. There is something of "chaste conversation coupled with fear," but it is no command.

Surely, no woman of common sense could be convinced the sooner for a "man's obstinacy" in using her ill; or think him "more a man" for being a tyrant. A fool, a brute, may be a tyrant; and if a woman is not of the same silly stamp, she must despise him, however he may have brought her to a seeming easiness. We have nothing else for it, when a man is resolved. But then you cannot call it making wedlock happy: hell, indeed, sir; this world's hell, I call it. There are, who expect their wives to love, serve, honour, and obey, only because they have vowed so to do; but what men are they? And what woman could value such from her heart, or be happy with such a man?—When love is reciprocal, sweet is the bondage, and easy the yoke; where that is, nothing is wanting: for ever banished be fear, the bane of happiness in every shape; at least with one of my temper. We may be fond of power, and it is often our own fault that we have not enough of it: a woman, that can seem to despise it, may have it to satiety. And what does this argue? You perverse souls, what does it argue?

I do believe, sir, you have as good a wife as any man "need to wish for;" and yet—What would you say? Nay, you have said. I will tell, I am resolved. Mrs. R——n, he says you are a mistress of contradiction. In close argument, you give him to understand that you think your judgment superior; that when you have brought him to declare his wishes,

you at once resolve to act directly opposite. Are these things so? Positively they are not. I cannot believe it, indeed, sir. I am very sure you would not utter a falsehood, black or white; nevertheless, I cannot believe it. There is some misconstruction; some words, or tone of voice, wrong understood; mistakes on one side or the other: but, in short, she appears to me grossly abused. And yet that cannot be, by the man in whom is no abuse. I know not how to behave between you: if I take her part, she will quarrel with me, I am sure; and if I take yours, so will you too. The third person, in matrimonial disputes, always comes off the worst. So God bless you both! and I advise you to go on in the same way, lest you should change for the worse.

Have you but *now* found out the way to make me an advocate for my sex? You forget, sir, the same thing has happened before. I believe we have both owned that we love a little contradiction, as a spur to each other. So I am not only like "my wife," but like my wife's husband. In short, and seriously, we are all like one another, in some degree:—if faults we have, we had them from you. I know a gentleman, who, when he was speaking of any one who had the misfortune to be born of wicked parents, always said, "I have no opinion of him; he is made of bad stuff." And this puts me in mind of our original—the *rib*, the *rib!* And there's a *bone* for you to pick! Pardon the pun, and pertness.

No, sir, I cannot hope that what I have said will amount to a proof of women's superiority, in goodness, to men; any more than I hope for an acknowledgment of it without a proof. Nevertheless, as you have more power, and do very often abuse that power, we, without doubt, have more to bear from you, than you from us. Without doubt, I say; because you cannot make me believe otherwise.

And have I, do you think, "been severe upon my own sex, yet seem to persuade myself that I was defending them?"

What a blundering brain have I! for ever producing dirt to be thrown in my own face! Though, please to hold your hand a little, for I am not yet sensible of what you accuse me. If any being but man could speak, I would allow that being to talk of women's consciences.

I once had some small acquaintance with lord Orrery, at the time when he was in disgrace with his father, his doating father, as you gently term him—for he had not so just an excuse as dotage, for his behaviour to his son. Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXVII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

North-End, Feb. 23, 1752.

I KNEW that I should provoke my dear correspondent, by what I wrote of men's setting out right in the marriage warfare; of governing by fear; of prerogative early exerted; and such like strange assertions. But, in the first place, you will be pleased to recollect to whom all this jargon is owing. Is it not to lady B—— herself? Look back, madam, for the occasion, which was our friend ——'s nuptials: and what a passive, tame soul you supposed his wife must be, if she wished to be happy. On this, my indignation arose against tyrants; and I gave it as my opinion, that such would be much more likely to be observed, than the kind, good-natured husband, who made it his study to oblige his wife: and angry, very angry, was I, against such of the sex as would, either way, give reason for the observation. Had I not been a lover of your wayward

sex, I should not have been so warm against them as you take it I was.

Your ladyship very happily expresses yourself, when you say, "a governor, a parent, a master, I could love, fear, and honour, at the same time: but to my husband, myself, I must be all love, no mixture of fear: certain hatred would attend it." A husband was formerly thought a governor; you have heard or read that he was called master: he is dearer than a parent, and nearer too. Be pleased to tell me, madam, why fear should mingle with your love to an indulgent parent, and produce hatred to a husband? Will you be pleased to show me in what the two sorts of fear, if two sorts there be, differ? As to the words myself, my husband, myself, they have a pretty sound with them; but they will be found very separable words; in short, that the solemn office, that has made them one flesh, has not been able, even in very material cases, to make them one spirit; and, when they differ, if there be not a fear of offending, God help them! God help *the myself!*

"While they behold their chaste conversation, coupled with fear."—That text had like to have overturned all your ladyship's reasoning; and how came you off? Prettily enough; because you were resolved to come off, and could easily convince yourself. It is no command, say you. But, madam, it is almost as bad for your argument, for it is a supposed unquestionable duty: yet I plead not for fear. My maxim is love, all love; and yet, when a woman is used to it, she expects it, and so considers it not either as a rarity or an obligation. The man is a quiet, good-natured creature, and loves his peace, and so is loving for his own sake. Strange humility that, which will make a woman think that she can repay the obligation by her acceptance of it! One thing, however, madam, let me tell you, that, in all our arguments of this nature, I will not allow you to look at home, and determine by yourself. You can know nothing of the world, nor of the argument, if you form your conclusions upon the conduct of a single pair.

And when I have mentioned my wife and *her myself*, it is not that I would reflect upon her, as either designing to be contradictory, or as being unusually so. No, madam, she falls into it naturally, as I may say, and as if she could not help it. And as *her myself* always prefaces his requests as if he would take her compliances as favours, he often finds it is but asking for a denial; and why? Because she would demonstrate that she has as great an aversion to the word fear as the best of her sex; and hesitates not to oppose, as an argument of her fortitude and independence of will. But what will you, who are so vehement against the word and thing fear, say, if I should assert that there cannot be love without fear? You say, you could fear a parent, yet honour and love that parent: I would rather, methinks, be the father than the husband of the woman, who could not fear me with the same sort of fear, that she could show to a fond and indulgent parent. And there, to return your ladyship's words, is a bone for you to pick!

I do not perfectly understand you, madam, in the following sentence: "We may be fond of power; and it is often our own fault that we have not enough of it. A woman that can seem to despise it, may have it to satiety. And what does this argue? You perverse souls, what does it argue?"

Again, your ladyship is a little unintelligible:—"If faults we have (as if you made a question of it, madam!), we have them from you.—And this puts me in mind of our original—the rib, the rib!" I thought it was Eve that gave the man the apple. I have not my Bible at hand:

but I think I remember some such words as these of an apostle: "Adam was not deceived; but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression."—"You have more to bear from us," you say, "than we have from you."—To this I wrote largely in my last.

You have not, madam, a blundering brain: and I hope I have not thrown dirt in my correspondent's face.

Your ladyship dares me to stop in my new work! You give me leave to stop. Your challenge, perhaps, comes in a critical time; for I am at a part, that it is four chances to one I shall not be able to get over. You cannot imagine how many difficult situations I have involved myself in. Entanglement, and extrication, and re-entanglement, have succeeded each other, as the day the night; and now the few friends, who have seen what I have written, doubt not but I am stuck fast. And, indeed, I think so myself.

I have read through lord Orrery's History of Swift. I greatly like it. I had the pleasure of telling my lord himself so, in Mr. Millar's shop, and of thanking him for the pleasure he had given me. He returned the compliment, in relation to Clarissa; and, having heard of my new design, was inquisitive about it. Though my lord is really, in his person and behaviour, as well as in his writings, an amiable man, I join with your ladyship most cordially in all you say of the author, of the dean, and of the dean's savage behaviour to his unhappy wife, and Vanessa; as it is of a piece with all those of his writings, in which he endeavours to debase the human, and to raise above it the brutal nature. I cannot think so hardly as some do of lord Orrery's observation—that the fearful deprivation, which reduced him to a state beneath that of the merest animal, seemed to be a punishment that had terrible justice in it.

Why will you so ungratefully depreciate a pen and a judgment, that every one, to whom I have read detached parts of your favours to me, admires? Take care, madam, how you make light of talents, of which while you think meanly, you are not likely to be duly thankful for. Your judgment of the works you have remarked upon are, by all who have heard me read them, thought admirable; and show a heart, as well as a head, for which you cannot be too grateful.

I have not been able to read any more than the first volume of Amelia. Poor Fielding! I could not help telling his sister, that I was equally surprised at and concerned for his continued lowness. Had your brother, said I, been born in a stable, or been a runner at a spunging-house, we should have thought him a genius, and wished he had had the advantage of a liberal education, and of being admitted into good company; but it is beyond my conception, that a man of family, and who had some learning, and who really is a writer, should descend so excessively low in all his pieces. Who can care for any of his people? A person of honour asked me the other day, what he could mean by saying, in his Covent Garden Journal, that he had followed Homer and Virgil in his Amelia. I answered, that he was justified in saying so, because he must mean Cotton's Virgil Travestied; where the women are drabs, and the men scoundrels. Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

April 22, 1752.

A SENTIMENT, my dear and good lady Bradshaigh, may not be absolutely unexceptionable, and yet be very happily expressed. My meaning and

my words agreed, when I wrote, that you very happily expressed yourself on the subject of love and fear, as applicable to a parent and a husband.

But you are at a loss how to make me understand you as to the two sorts of fear which you want to distinguish, the one to a parent, the other to a husband. Awe, the word awe, is happily thought of by your ladyship. "Are we not bred up with awe to a parent? (you ask.) Certainly (say you); and it is often created by our being sensible we are liable to be corrected." So, madam, a wife, (and who is perfect? who wants not some correction?) having no apprehension of being corrected, of being chidden, therefore, cannot fear her husband, as when a child she could a parent! You have most charmingly strengthened my argument: I thank you, madam. Did I not say that a mixture of fear with the love was necessary to make an obliging wife? And do you not hint, that if the wife had the same motive for it as the child had, fear of rebuke, of chastisement, of correction (by which I mean not stripes, you may be sure—indulgent parents maintain not their authority by stripes), the husband might be entitled to the same kind of awe that the parent was; and it would be no discredit to the grown-up woman, the wife, to be as much afraid of offending a kind, a good husband, as, when a child, she was of offending a kind, an indulgent parent? I was not wrong, therefore, I think, when I asked your ladyship why fear should mingle with your love of an indulgent parent (for that was the parent I meant, and not the severe one), and produce hatred to a husband? You will answer me as above. Your ladyship knows your answer. The wife has no apprehension of being corrected; if chidden, she can chide again. Nor, as your ladyship seems to have proved, was I much out of the way when I observed, from what your ladyship said of the temper of your then lately-married friend,—though I said it with indignation against such tyrant husbands,—that such would be much more likely to be observed, than the kind, good-natured man, who made it his study to oblige his wife. Upon the whole, if your ladyship will give me leave, I will assert that there hardly can be love without fear—fear of offending. And I repeat, "that I would rather be the father than the husband of the woman, who could not fear me with the same sort of fear, that she could show to a fond and indulgent parent." Why, madam, I can, on the same motives, fear my wife; but I am not sure, good creature, good wife, as she really is, that I have shown my prudence in letting her see my fear.

But you say that the woman is under no obligation to her husband for his love, provided she loves. With all my heart, madam. I will not make distinctions; I will not say that there is a merit in the man's love to a single object, on a supposition that the law of nature discourages not polygamy, and that the law of God nowhere in his word condemns it. No, I will not; because the law of his country ought to determine him.—Why, why would your ladyship throw out bones for so spiteful, so vengeful, a man to pick? But may I not ask, that, if the man who loves, loves for his own sake, whether the woman who loves, loves not also the man chiefly for hers? Yes, says your ladyship, methinks: and so the obligation is equal; so be it.

Want of perspicuity is not by any means the fault of your ladyship's writing: yet I really did not take your meaning in the passage relating to the power that women might have if they sought it. I meant not in that place to provoke you, dearly as I sometimes love to try to make you angry with me, which yet I never

could do, though I have, very, very often, deserved your anger. Thus you explain yourself:

"You said, we were dear lovers of power. I did not deny it; and I thought it our own fault that we had not enough of it." And have not your sex here in England enough of it? That fault is letting you see we are fond of it. Bless me, madam, should we not feel it, if we did not see it? "For which reason, such is your pride, you will not allow us any, if you can help it," adds your ladyship. If we can help it! that is power with a vengeance which a wife exerts, and a husband cannot help himself.

"Again unintelligible (says your ladyship: Fie upon you!). Why we have faults: I made no question of it. How should we be faultless, considering our original? Was not woman made of man? From whence, then, our faults?" But, madam, be so good as to consider, that man, at the time woman was formed out of his rib, was in a state of innocence. He had not fallen. The devil had need of a helper: he soon found one in Eve. But, if I may be forgiven for a kind of pun, you seem to think, madam, that the faults of men lie in the flesh, the faults of women are deeper—they lie in the bone. I believe you have hit upon it. I love to provoke you, it is true; but I also love to agree with your ladyship, in material articles. The difference between us, in this point, is, that I confirm by experience what you advance only from conjecture; for, unless you look out of yourself, how should you know that women's faults lie so deep that they must be unformed, and new made up again, to amend them?

The fault of the great author, whose letters to his friend you have been reading, is, that Tully is wholly concerned for the fame of Cicero; and that for fame and for self-exaltation's sake. In some of his orations, what is called his vehemence (but really is too often insult and ill-manners) so transports him, that a modern pleader, and yet these are often intolerably abusive, would not be heard, if he were to take the like freedoms. This difference, however, ought to be mentioned, to the honour of the ancient; he generally, I believe, being governed by the justice of his cause. The moderns too seldom regard that at all; and care for nothing but their fees. But, after all, Cicero's constitutional faults seem to be vanity and cowardice. Great geniuses seldom have *small* faults.

You have seen, I presume, Dr. Middleton's Life of Cicero. It is a fine piece; but the doctor, I humbly think, has played the panegyrist, in some places in it, rather than the historian. The present laureat's performance on the same subject, of which Dr. Middleton's is the foundation, is a spirited and pretty piece. He makes his observations on the character of Cicero, not by controverting any point with the doctor; but, taking for granted, as if he had no other lights, every thing that the doctor advances in his favour.

You greatly oblige me, madam, whenever you give me your observations upon what you read. Cicero was a prodigy. His works, his genius, will be admired to the end of time. But he was the greatest, the grossest lover, courter of adulation, and one of the greatest dastards, that ever lived. Yet, in the former quality, he only spoke out what many others mean. He was fond of glory; he could not but be conscious of his very great talents. I have often quarrels, arising in my mind, against the affectation of some ingenious moderns, who are always seeking to disclaim merits, which, were they in earnest, their modesty would not permit them to publish to the world as they do in the treatises which they give the public. There may be a

manly sensibility, surely, expressed, which yet may show, that though the author of a work, or the performer of a good action, is tolerably skilled in his subject, or can take delight in his beneficence; yet that he is not proud of understanding or doing what he ought to understand or do, if he pretends to write or to act. I am not a little embarrassed in my new piece (so I was in my two former) with the affectation that custom almost compels one to be guilty of—to make my characters disclaim the merits of the good they do, or the knowledge they pretend to; and to be afraid of reporting the praises due, and given to them by others, who are benefited either by the act or the example, although the praises given are as much to the honour of the giver's sensibility, as of the receiver's. Does any body believe these disclaimers? Does not every body think them affected, and often pharisaical? and even their pretences to modesty are what Lovelace calls, traps laid for praise! Yet custom exacts them; and who is great enough to be above custom? I think I would wish that my good man, and even my good girl, should be thought to be above regarding this custom. To receive praise with a grace, is a grace. But it must be so received, as that it should not be thought to puff up or exalt the person in his own opinion. The person praised must show, that he is sensible he has done no more than his duty; that he gave not himself either his talents, or his ability to do good; and should be the more humble, the more thankful, for those talents, and for that ability. Arrogance, self-conceit, must be banished his heart. Even Lovelace can say, "If I have any thing valuable as to intellectuals, those are not my own; and to be proud of what a man is answerable for the abuse of, and has no merit in the right use of, is to strut, like the jay, in a borrowed plumage."

I really think my lord Orrery, in his Life of Swift, has intended to be laudably impartial. I have no notion of that friendship, which makes a man think himself obliged to gloss over the faults of a man, whom he wishes not to have great ones. Is it not a strong proof of the sacred authority of the Scriptures, that the histories of David, Solomon, and its other heroes, are handed down to us with their mixture of vices and virtues? Lord Orrery says very high and very great things of Swift. The bad ones we knew, in part, before. Had he attempted to whiten them over, would it not have weakened the credibility of what he says in his favour? I am told, that my lord is mistaken in some of his facts; for instance, in that wherein he asserts, that Swift's learning was a late acquirement. I am very well warranted by the son of an eminent divine, a prelate, who was for three years what is called his *chum*, in the following account of that fact:—Dr. Swift made as great a progress in his learning, at the University of Dublin, in his youth, as any of his cotemporaries; but was so very ill-natured and troublesome, that he was made *Terræ Filius* (sir Roger will explain what that means, if your ladyship is unacquainted with the University term), on purpose to have a pretence to expel him. He raked up all the scandal against the heads of that University that a severe inquirer, and a still severer temper, could get together into his harangue. He was expelled in consequence of his abuse, and, having his *decessit*, afterwards got admitted, at Oxford, to his degrees.

I cannot find that my lord was very intimate with him. As from a man of quality, and the son of a nobleman who had been obnoxious to ministers, no doubt but the dean might countenance those professions of friendship, which the young lord

might be forward to make to a man, who was looked upon as the genius of Ireland, and the fashion. But he could be only acquainted with him in the decline of the dean's genius.

My lord, I think, has partly drawn censure upon himself, by a little piece of affectation. *My friends* will, he says, by way of preface to some of the things that the friends of Swift think the severest. I was a little disgusted, as I read it, at these ill-placed assumptions of friendship in words. I thought these affectations below lord Orrery, as it seemed, by them, as if he was proud of being thought of as a friend, by the man, who, whatever his head was, had not, I am afraid, near so good a heart as his own.

Mr. Temple, nephew to sir William Temple, and brother to lord Palmerston, who lately died at Bath, declared to a friend of mine, that sir William hired Swift at his first entrance into the world, to read to him, and sometimes to be his amanuensis, at the rate of 20*l.* a year and his board, which was then high preferment to him; but that sir William never favoured him with his conversation, because of his ill qualities, nor allowed him to sit down at table with him. Swift, your ladyship will easily see by his writings, had bitterness, satire, moroseness, that must make him insufferable, both to equals and inferiors, and unsafe for his superiors to countenance. Sir William Temple was a wise and discerning man. He could easily see through a young fellow taken into a low office, and inclined to forget himself. Probably, too, the dean was always unpolite, and never could be a man of breeding. Sir William Temple was one of the politest men of his time.

Whoever the lady be, who is so severe upon lord Orrery, I cannot but think that she is too severe. The story of Swift's marriage, and behaviour to a worthy, very worthy wife, I have been told long before lord Orrery's history of him came out. It was not, as the angry lady charges, a chimæra, but a certain truth. And this I was informed of by a lady of goodness, and no enemy but to what was bad in Swift. Surely this lady, who calls my lord to account for his unchristian-like usage of a dead friend, should have shown a little more of the Christian in her invectives. Near twenty years ago, I heard from a gentleman, now living, with whom Vanessa lived, or lodged, in England, an account of the dean's behaviour to the unhappy woman, much less to his reputation than the account my lord gives of that affair. According to this gentleman's account, she was not the creature that she became when she was in Ireland, whither she followed him, and, in hopes to make herself an interest with his vanity, threw herself into glare and expense; and, at last, by disappointment, into a habit of drinking, till grief and the effects of that vice destroyed her. You may gather from that really pretty piece of his, Cadenus and Vanessa, how much he flattered her, and that he took great pains to gloss over that affair. I remember once to have seen a little collection of letters and poetical scraps of Swift's, which passed between him and Mrs. Van Homrigh, this same Vanessa, which the bookseller then told me were sent him to be published, from the originals, by this lady, in resentment of his perfidy.

I have not had an opportunity to know what the two doctors you mention say of lord Orrery's Life of Swift. Adieu, dear madam, yours, &c.

LETTER LXXIX.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to his Father.

Dear sir, 1760.

An address in writing, from a person who has the pleasure of being

with you every day, may appear singular. However, I have preferred this method, as upon paper I can speak without a blush, and be heard without interruption. If my letter displeases you, impute it, dear sir, only to yourself. You have treated me, not like a son, but like a friend. Can you be surprised that I should communicate to a friend all my thoughts, and all my desires? Unless the friend approve them, let the father never know them; or, at least, let him know, at the same time, that, however reasonable, however eligible, my scheme may appear to me, I would rather forget it for ever, than cause him the slightest uneasiness.

When I first returned to England, attentive to my future interest, you were so good as to give me hopes of a seat in parliament. This seat, it was supposed, would be an expense of fifteen hundred pounds. This design flattered my vanity, as it might enable me to shine in so august an assembly. It flattered a nobler passion; I promised myself that, by the means of this seat, I might be one day the instrument of some good to my country. But I soon perceived how little a mere virtuous inclination, unassisted by talents, could contribute towards that great end; and a very short examination discovered to me, that those talents had not fallen to my lot. Do not, dear sir, impute this declaration to a false modesty, the meanest species of pride. Whatever else I may be ignorant of, I think I know myself, and shall always endeavour to mention my good qualities without vanity, and my defects without repugnance. I shall say nothing of the most intimate acquaintance with his country and language, so absolutely necessary to every senator. Since they may be acquired, to allege my deficiency in them, would seem only the plea of laziness. But I shall say with great truth, that I never possessed that gift of speech, the first requisite of an orator, which use and labour may improve, but which nature alone can bestow. That my temper, quiet, retired, somewhat reserved, could neither acquire popularity, bear up against opposition, nor mix with ease in the crowds of public life. That even my genius (if you will allow me any) is better qualified for the deliberate compositions of the closet, than for the extemporary discourses of the parliament. An unexpected objection would disconcert me; and as I am incapable of explaining to others, what I do not thoroughly understand myself, I should be meditating while I ought to be answering. I even want necessary prejudices of party and of nation. In popular assemblies, it is often necessary to inspire them; and never orator inspired well a passion, which he did not feel himself. Suppose me even mistaken in my own character; to set out with the repugnance such an opinion must produce, offers but an indifferent prospect. But I hear you say, it is not necessary that every man should enter into parliament with such exalted hopes. It is to acquire a title the most glorious of any in a free country, and to employ the weight and consideration it gives in the service of one's friends. Such motives, though not glorious, yet are not dishonourable; and if we had a borough in our command, if you could bring me in without any great expense, or if our fortune enabled us to despise that expense, then, indeed, I should think them of the greatest strength. But with our private fortune, is it worth while to purchase, at so high a rate, a title, honourable in itself, but which I must share with every fellow that can lay out fifteen hundred pounds? Besides, dear sir, a merchandise is of little value to the owner when he is resolved not to sell it.

I should affront your penetration, did I not suppose you now see the

drift of this letter. It is to appropriate, to another use, the sum with which you destined to bring me into parliament; to employ it, not in making me great, but in rendering me happy. I have often heard you say yourself, that the allowance you had been so indulgent as to grant me, though very liberal in regard to your estate, was yet but small, when compared with the almost necessary extravagances of the age. I have, indeed, found it so, notwithstanding a good deal of economy, and an exemption from many of the common expenses of youth. This, dear sir, would be a way of supplying these deficiencies, without any additional expense to you.—But I forbear.—If you think my proposals reasonable, you want no entreaties to engage you to comply with them; if otherwise, all will be without effect.

All that I am afraid of, dear sir, is, that I should seem not so much asking a favour, as this really is, as exacting a debt. After all I can say, you will still remain the best judge of my good, and your own circumstances. Perhaps, like most landed gentlemen, an addition to my annuity would suit you better than a sum of money given at once; perhaps the sum itself may be too considerable. Whatever you shall think proper to bestow upon me, or in whatever manner, will be received with equal gratitude.

I intended to stop here; but, as I abhor the least appearance of art, I think it will be better to lay open my whole scheme at once. The unhappy war, which now desolates Europe, will oblige me to defer seeing France till a peace. But that reason can have no influence upon Italy, a country which every scholar must long to see. Should you grant my request, and not disapprove of my manner of employing your bounty, I would leave England this autumn, and pass the winter at Lausanne, with M. de Voltaire and my old friends. The armies no longer obstruct my passage, and it must be indifferent to you whether I am at Lausanne or at London during the winter, since I shall not be at Beriton. In the spring I would cross the Alps, and, after some stay in Italy, as the war must then be terminated, return home through France, to live happily with your and my dear mother. I am now two-and-twenty; a tour must take up a considerable time; and though I believe you have no thoughts of settling me soon (and I am sure I have not), yet so many things may intervene, that the man, who does not travel early, runs a great risk of not travelling at all. But this part of my scheme, as well as the whole, I submit entirely to you.

Permit me, dear sir, to add, that I do not know whether the complete compliance with my wishes could increase my love and gratitude; but that I am very sure no refusal could diminish those sentiments with which I shall always remain, dear sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXXX.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq.

Beriton, April 29, 1767.

Dear Holroyd,

I HAPPENED to-night to stumble upon a very odd piece of intelligence in the St. James's Chronicle; it related to the marriage of a certain Monsieur Olroy, formerly captain of hussars. I do not know how it came into my head that this captain of hussars was not unknown to me, and that he might possibly be an acquaintance of yours. If I am not mistaken in my conjecture, pray give my compliments to him, and tell him from me, that I am at least

as well pleased that he is married as if I were so myself. Assure him, however, that though as a philosopher I may prefer celibacy, yet, as a politician, I think it highly proper that the species should be propagated by the usual method; assure him even that I am convinced, that if celibacy is exposed to fewer miseries, marriage can alone promise real happiness, since domestic enjoyments are the source of every other good. May such happiness, which is bestowed on few, be given to him; the transient blessings of beauty, and the more durable ones of fortune, good sense, and an amiable disposition.

I can easily conceive, and as easily excuse you, if you have thought mighty little this winter of your poor rusticated friend. I have been confined ever since Christmas, and confined by a succession of very melancholy occupations. I had scarcely arrived at Beriton, where I proposed staying only about a fortnight, when a brother of Mrs. Gibbon's died unexpectedly, though after a very long and painful illness. We were scarcely recovered from the confusion, which such an event must produce in a family, when my father was taken dangerously ill, and with some intervals has continued so ever since. I can assure you, my dear Holroyd, that the same event appears in a very different light when the danger is serious and immediate; or when, in the gaiety of a tavern dinner, we affect an insensibility, that would do us no great honour were it real. My father is now much better; but I have since been assailed by a severe stroke—the loss of a friend. You remember, perhaps, an officer of our militia, whom I sometimes used to compare to yourself. Indeed, the comparison would have done honour to any one. His feelings were tender and noble, and he was always guided by them: his principles were just and generous, and he acted up to them. I shall say no more, and you will excuse my having said so much, of a man with whom you were unacquainted; but my mind is just now so very full of him, that I cannot easily talk, or even think, of any thing else. If I know you right, you will not be offended at my *weakness*.

What rather adds to my uneasiness, is the necessity I am under of joining our militia the day after to-morrow. Though the lively hurry of such a scene might contribute to divert my ideas, yet every circumstance of it, and the place itself (which was that of his residence), will give me many a painful moment. I know nothing would better raise my spirits than a visit from you: the request may appear unseasonable, but I think I have heard you speak of *an uncle* you had near Southampton. At all events, I hope you will snatch a moment to write to me, and give me some account of your present situation and future designs. As you are now fettered, I should expect you will not be such a *hic et ubique*, as you have been since your arrival in England. I stay at Southampton from the first to the twenty-eighth of May, and then propose making a short visit to town: if you are any where in the neighbourhood of it you may depend upon seeing me. I shall then concert measures for seeing a little more of you next winter than I have lately done, as I hope to take a pretty long spell in town. I suppose Guise has often fallen in your way: he has never once written to me, nor I to him: in the country we want materials, and in London we want time. I ought to recollect, that you even want time to read my unmeaning scrawl. Believe, however, my dear Holroyd, that it is the sincere expression of a heart entirely yours.

LETTER LXXXI.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq.

October 6, 1771.

Dear Holroyd,

I SIT down to answer your epistle, after taking a very pleasant ride.—A ride! and upon what?—Upon a horse.—*You lie!*—I don't.—I have got a droll little poney, and intend to renew the long forgotten practice of equitation, as it was known in the world before the second of June of the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three. As I used to reason against riding, so I can now argue for it; and indeed the principal use I know in human reason is, when called upon, to furnish arguments for what we have an inclination to do.

What do you mean by presuming to affirm that I am of no use here? Farmer Gibbon of no use? *Last week* I sold all my hops, and I believe well, at nine guineas a hundred, to a very responsible man. Some people think I might have got more at Weyhill fair, but that would have been an additional expense, and a great uncertainty. Our quantity has disappointed us very much: but I think, that, besides hops for the family, there will not be less than 500*l.*;—no contemptible sum off thirteen small acres, and two of them planted last year only. *This week* I let a little farm in Petersfield by auction, and propose raising it from 25*l.* to 35*l.* *per annum*:—and farmer Gibbon of no use!

To be serious, I have but one reason for resisting your invitation and my own wishes; that is, Mrs. Gibbon I left nearly alone all last winter, and shall do the same this. She submits very cheerfully to that state of solitude; but, on sounding her, I am convinced that she would think it unkind were I to leave her at present. I know you so well, that I am sure you will acquiesce in this reason; and let me make my next visit to Sheffield Place from town, which I think may be a little before Christmas. I should like to hear something of the precise time, duration, and extent of your intended tour to Bucks. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq. at Edinburgh.

Bentinck Street, Aug. 7, 1773.

Dear Holroyd,

I BEG ten thousand pardons for not being dead, as I certainly ought to be. But, such is my abject nature, that I had rather live in Bentinck Street, attainted and convicted of the sin of laziness, than enjoy your applause either at Old Nick's, or even in the Elysian Fields. After all, could you expect that I should honour with my correspondence a wild barbarian of the bogs of Erin? Had the natives intercepted my letter, the terrors occasioned by such unknown magic characters might have been fatal to you. But now you have escaped the fury of their hospitality, and are arrived among a cee-vi-leezed nation, I may venture to renew my intercourse.

You tell me of a long list of dukes, lords, and chieftains, of renown, to whom you are introduced; were I with you, I should prefer one *David* to them all. When you are at Edinburgh, I hope you will not fail to visit the stye of that fattest of Epicurus's hogs, and inform yourself whether there remains no hope of its recovering the use of its right paw. There is another animal of *great*, though not perhaps of *equal*, and certainly not of *similar* merit, one Robertson: has he almost created the new world? Many other men you

have undoubtedly seen, in the country where you are at present, who must have commanded your esteem: but when you return, if you are not very honest, you will possess great advantages over me in any dispute concerning Caledonian merit.

Boodle's and Atwood's are now no more. The last stragglers, and Godfrey Clarke in the rear of all, are moved away to their several castles; and I now enjoy, in the midst of London, a delicious solitude. My library, Kensington Gardens, and a few parties with new acquaintance who are chained to London (among whom I reckon Goldsmith and sir Joshua Reynolds), fill up my time, and the monster *Ennui* preserves a very respectful distance. By the bye, your friends Batt, sir John Russel, and Lascelles, dined with me one day before they set off; for I sometimes give the prettiest little dinner in the world. But all this composure draws near its conclusion.—About the sixteenth of this month Mr. Eliot carries me away, and after picking up Mrs. Gibbon at Bath, sets me down at Port Eliot; there I shall remain six weeks, or, in other words, to the end of September. My future motions, whether to London, Derbyshire, or a longer stay in Cornwall (pray, is not "motion to stay" rather in the Hibernian style?), will depend on the life of Port Eliot, the time of the meeting of parliament, and perhaps the impatience of Mr. ******, lord of Lenborough. One of my pleasures to town I forgot to mention, the unexpected visit of Deyverdun, who accompanies his young lord (very young indeed!) on a two months' tour to England.—He took the opportunity of the earl's going down to the duke of * * * * * * *, to spend a fortnight (nor do I recollect a more pleasant one) in Bentinck Street. They are now gone together into Yorkshire, and I think it doubtful whether I shall see him again before his return to Leipsic. It is a melancholy reflection, that while one is plagued with acquaintance at the corner of every street, real friends should be separated from each other by unsurmountable bars, and obliged to catch at a few transient moments of interview. I desire that you and my lady (whom I most respectfully greet) would take your share of that very new and acute observation, not so large a share indeed as my Swiss friend, since nature and fortune give *us* more frequent opportunities of being together. You cannot expect news from a desert, and such is London at present. The papers give you the full harvest of public intelligence; and I imagine that the eloquent nymphs of Twickenham communicate all the transactions of the polite, the amorous, and the marrying world. The great pantomime of Portsmouth was universally admired; and I am angry at my own laziness in neglecting an excellent opportunity of seeing it. Foote has given us the Bankrupt, a serious and sentimental piece, with very severe strictures on the license of scandal in attacking private characters. Adieu. Forgive and epistolize me. I shall not believe you sincere in the former, unless you make Bentinck Street your inn. I fear I shall be gone; but Mrs. Ford and the parrot will be proud to receive you and my lady after your long peregrination, from which I expect great improvements. Has she got the brogue upon the tip of her tongue?

LETTER LXXXIII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq.

Paris, August 13, 1777.

WELL, and who is the culprit now?—Thus far had I written in

the pride of my heart, and fully determined to inflict an epistle upon you, even before I received any answer to my former; I was very near a bull. But this forward half-line lays ten days barren and inactive, till its generative powers were excited by the missive which I received yesterday. What a wretched piece of work do we seem to be making of it in America? The greatest force, which any European power ever ventured to transport into that continent, is not strong enough even to attack the enemy; the naval strength of Great Britain is not sufficient to prevent the Americans (they have almost lost the appellation of rebels) from receiving every assistance that they wanted; and in the mean time you are obliged to call out the militia to defend your own coasts against their privateers. You possibly may expect from me some account of the designs and policy of the French court; but I choose to decline that task for two reasons: 1st, Because you may find them laid open in every newspaper; and 2dly, Because I live too much with their courtiers and ministers to know any thing about them. I shall only say, that I am not under any immediate apprehensions of a war with France. It is much more pleasant, as well as profitable, to view in safety the raging of the tempest, occasionally to pick up some pieces of the wreck, and to improve their trade, their agriculture, and their finances, while the two countries are *lento collisa duello.** Far from taking any step to put a speedy end to this astonishing dispute, I should not be surprised if next summer they were to lend their cordial assistance to England, as to the weaker party. As to my personal engagement with the D. of R., I recollect a few slight skirmishes, but nothing that deserves the name of a general engagement. The extravagance of some disputants, both French and English, who have espoused the cause of America, sometimes inspires me with an extraordinary vigour. Upon the whole, I find it much easier to defend the justice than the policy of our measures; but there are certain cases, where whatever is repugnant to sound policy ceases to be just.

The more I see of Paris, the more I like it. The regular course of the society in which I live is easy, polite, and entertaining; and almost every day is marked by the acquisition of some new acquaintance, who is worth cultivating, or who at least is worth remembering. To the great admiration of the French, I regularly dine and regularly sup, drink a dish of strong coffee after each meal, and find my stomach a citizen of the world. The spectacles (particularly the Italian, and above all the French Comedies), which are open the whole summer, afford me an agreeable relaxation from company; and to show you that I frequent them from taste, and not from idleness, I have not yet seen the Colisee, the Vauxhall, the Boulevards, or any of those places of entertainment which constitute Paris to most of our countrymen. Occasional trips to dine or sup in some of the thousand country houses, which are scattered round the environs of Paris, serve to vary the scene. In the mean while the summer insensibly glides away, and the fatal month of October approaches, when I must change the house of madame Necker for the House of Commons. I regret that I could not choose the winter, instead of the summer, for this excursion: I should have found many valuable persons, and should have preserved others whom I have lost as I began to know them. The duke de Choiseul, who deserves attention both for himself and for keeping the best house in Paris, passes

* Engaged in a lingering war.

seven months of the year in Touraine; and though I have been tempted, I consider with horror a journey of sixty leagues into the country. The princess of Beauveau, who is a most superior woman, had been absent about six weeks, and does not return till the 24th of this month. A large body of recruits will be assembled by the Fontainbleau journey; but, in order to have a thorough knowledge of this splendid country, I ought to stay till the month of January; and if I could be sure, that opposition would be as tranquil as they were last year — I think your life has been as animated, or, at least, as tumultuous; and I envy you lady Payne, &c., much more than either the primate or the chief justice. Let not the generous breast of my lady be torn by the black serpents of envy. She still possesses the first place in the sentiments of her slave: but the adventure of the fan was a mere accident, owing to lord Carmarthen. Adieu. I think you may be satisfied. I say nothing of my terrestrial affairs.

LETTER LXXXIV.

From Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq.

February 6th, 1779.

You are quiet and peaceable, and do not bark, as usual, at my silence. To reward you, I would send you some news, but we are asleep: no foreign intelligence, except the capture of a frigate; no certain accounts from the West Indies, and a dissolution of parliament, which seems to have taken place since Christmas. In the papers you will see negotiations, changes of departments, &c., and I have *some* reason to believe that those reports are not entirely without foundation. Portsmouth is no longer an object of speculation; the whole stream of all men, and all parties, run one way. Sir Hugh is disgraced, ruined, &c. &c.; and as an old wound has broken out again, they say he must have his leg cut off as soon as he has time. In a night or two we shall be in a blaze of illumination, from the zeal of naval heroes, land patriots, and tallow chandlers; the last are not the least sincere. I want to hear some details of your military and familiar proceedings. By your silence I suppose your admire Davis, and dislike my pamphlet; yet such is the public folly, that we have a second edition in the press: the fashionable style of the clergy is to say they have not read it. If Maria does not take care, I shall write a much sharper invective against her, for *not* answering my diabolical book. My lady carried it down, with a solemn promise that I should receive an *unassisted* French letter. Yet I embrace the little animal, as well as my lady, and the *spes altera Romæ*.* Adieu.

There is a buzz about a peace, and Spanish mediation.

LETTER LXXXV.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, September 30th, 1783.

I ARRIVED safe in harbour last Saturday, the 27th instant, about ten o'clock in the morning; but, as the post only goes out twice a week, it was not in my power to write before this day. Except one day, between Langres and Besançon, which was laborious enough, I finished my easy and gentle airing without any fatigue, either of mind or body. I found Deyverdun well and happy, but much more happy at the sight of a friend, and the accomplishment of a scheme, which he had so long and impatiently

* The other hope of Rome.

desired. His garden, terrace, and park, have even exceeded the most sanguine of my expectations and remembrances; and you yourself cannot have forgotten the charming prospect of the lake, the mountains, and the declivity of the Pays de Vaud. But as human life is perpetually chequered with good and evil, I have found some disappointments on my arrival. The easy nature of Deyverdun, his indolence, and his impatience, had prompted him to reckon too positively that his house would be vacant at Michaelmas; some unforeseen difficulties have arisen, or have been discovered when it was already too late, and the consummation of our hopes is (I am much afraid) postponed to next spring. At first I was knocked down by the unexpected thunderbolt; but I have gradually been reconciled to my fate, and have granted a free and gracious pardon to my friend. As his own apartment, which afforded me a temporary shelter, is much too narrow for a settled residence, we hired, for the winter, a convenient, ready-furnished apartment, in the nearest part of the Rue de Bourg, whose back door leads in three steps to the terrace and garden, as often as a tolerable day shall tempt us to enjoy their beauties: and this arrangement has even its advantage, of giving us time to deliberate and provide, before we enter on a larger and more regular establishment. But this is not the sum of my misfortunes: hear, and pity! The day after my arrival (Sunday) we had just finished a temperate dinner, and intended a round of visits on foot, *chapeau sous le bras*, when, most unfortunately, Deyverdun proposed to show me something in the court: we boldly and successfully ascended a flight of stone steps, but in the descent I missed my footing, and strained, or sprained, my ancle in a painful manner. My old latent enemy (I do not mean the devil), who is always on the watch, has made an ungenerous use of his advantage, and I much fear that my arrival at Lausanne will be marked with a fit of the gout, though it is quite unnecessary that the intelligence or suspicion should find its way to Bath. Yesterday afternoon I lay, or at least sat, in state, to receive visits, and at the same moment my room was filled with four different nations. The loudest of these nations was the single voice of the abbé Raynal, who, like your friend, has chosen this place for the asylum of freedom and history. His conversation, which might be very agreeable, is intolerably loud, peremptory, and insolent; and you would imagine, that he alone was the monarch and legislator of the world. Adieu. I embrace my lady, and the infants. With regard to the important transactions, for which you are constituted plenipotentiary, I expect, with some impatience, but with perfect confidence, the result of your labours. You may remember what I mentioned of my conversation with * * * * * about the place of minister at Bern: I have talked it over with Deyverdun, who does not dislike the idea, provided this place was allowed to be my villa during at least two-thirds of the year; but for my part I am sure, that * * * * * are worth more than ministerial friendship and gratitude; so I am inclined to think that they are preferable to an office, which would be procured with difficulty, enjoyed with constraint and expense, and lost, perhaps, next April, in the annual revolutions of our domestic government. Again adieu.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lady Sheffield.

Lausanne, October 28, 1783.

THE progress of my gout is in general so regular, and there is so

much uniformity in the History of its Decline and Fall, that I have hitherto indulged my laziness, without much shame or remorse, without supposing that you would be very anxious for my safety, which has been sufficiently provided for by the triple care of my friend Deyverdun, my humbler friend Caplin, and a very conversable physician (not the famous Tissot), whose ordinary fee is ten batz, about fifteen pence English. After the usual increase and decrease of the member (for it has been confined to the injured part), the gout has retired in good order; and the remains of weakness, which obliged me to move on the rugged pavement of Lausanne with a stick, or rather small crutch, are to be ascribed to the sprain, which might have been a much more serious business. As I have now spent a month at Lausanne, you will inquire with much curiosity, more kindness, and some mixture of spite and malignity, how far the place has answered my expectations, and whether I do not repent of a resolution, which has appeared so rash and ridiculous to my ambitious friends? To this question, however natural and reasonable, I shall not return an immediate answer, for two reasons: 1. *I have not yet made a fair trial.* The disappointment and delay, with regard to Deyverdun's house, will confine us this winter to lodgings, rather convenient than spacious or pleasant. I am only beginning to recover my strength and liberty, and to look about on persons and things: the greatest part of those persons are in the country, taken up with their vintage; my books are not yet arrived; and, in short, I cannot look upon myself as settled in that comfortable way, which you and I understand and relish. Yet the weather has been heavenly, and till this time, the end of October, we enjoy the brightness of the sun, and somewhat gently complain of its immoderate heat. 2. If I should be too sanguine in explaining my satisfaction in what I have done, you would ascribe that satisfaction to the novelty of the scene, and the inconstancy of man; and I deem it far more safe and prudent to postpone any positive declaration, till I am placed by experience beyond the danger of repentance and recantation. Yet of one thing I am sure, that I possess in this country, as well as in England, the best cordial of life, a sincere, tender, and sensible friend, adorned with the most valuable and pleasant qualities both of the heart and head. The inferior enjoyments of leisure and society are likewise in my power; and in the short excursions, which I have hitherto made, I have commenced or renewed my acquaintance with a certain number of persons, more especially women (who, at least in France and this country, are undoubtedly superior to our prouder sex), of rational minds and elegant manners. I breakfast alone, and have declared that I receive no visits in a morning, which you will easily suppose is devoted to study. I find it impossible, without inconvenience, to defer my dinner beyond two o'clock. We have got a very good woman cook. Deyverdun, who is somewhat of an epicurean philosopher, understands the management of a table, and we frequently invite a guest or two, to share our luxurious, but not extravagant repasts. The afternoons are (and will be much more so hereafter) devoted to society, and I shall find it necessary to play at cards much oftener than in London: but I do not dislike that way of passing a couple of hours, and I shall not be ruined at shilling whist. As yet I have not supped, but in the course of the winter I must sometimes sacrifice an evening abroad, and in exchange I hope sometimes to steal a day at home, without going

into company. * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * I have all this time been talking to lord Sheffield; I hope that he has despatched my affairs, and it would give me pleasure to hear that I am no longer member for Lymington, nor lord of *Lenborough*. Adieu. I feel every day that the distance serves only to make me think with more tenderness of the persons whom I love.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, Nov. 14th, 1783.

LAST Tuesday, November eleventh, after plaguing and vexing yourself all the morning about some business of your fertile creation, you went to the House of Commons, and passed the afternoon, the evening, and perhaps the night, without sleep or food, stifled in a close room, heated by the respiration of six hundred politicians, inflamed by party passion, and tired of the repetition of dull nonsense, which, in that illustrious assembly, so far outweighs the proportion of reason and eloquence. On the same day, after a studious morning, a friendly dinner, and a cheerful assembly of both sexes, I retired to rest at eleven o'clock, satisfied with the past day, and certain that the next would afford me the return of the same quiet and rational enjoyments. *Which has the better bargain?* Seriously, I am every hour more grateful to my own judgment and resolution, and only regret that I so long delayed the execution of a favourite plan, which I am convinced is the best adapted to my character and inclinations. Your conjecture of the revolutions of my face, when I heard that the house was for this winter inaccessible, is probable, but false. I bore my disappointment with the temper of a sage, and only use it to render the prospect of next year still more pleasing to my imagination. You are likewise mistaken, in imputing my fall to the awkwardness of my limbs. The same accident might have happened to Slingsby himself, or to any *hero* of the age, the most distinguished for his *bodily activity*. I have now resumed my entire strength, and walk with caution, yet with speed and safety, through the streets of this mountainous city. After a month of the finest autumn I ever saw, the *bise* made me feel my old acquaintance; the weather is now milder, and this present day is dark and rainy, not much better than what you probably enjoy in England.—The town is comparatively empty, but the noblesse are returning every day from their chateaux, and I already perceive, that I shall have more reason to complain of dissipation than of dullness. As I told lady S., I am afraid of being too rash and hasty in expressing my satisfaction; but I must again repeat, that appearances are extremely favourable. I am sensible, that general praise conveys no distinct ideas, but it is very difficult to enter into particulars where the individuals are unknown, or indifferent to our correspondent. You have forgotten the *old* generation, and in twenty years a new one is grown up. Death has swept many from the world, and chance or choice has brought many to this place. If you inquire after your acquaintance, Catherine, you must be told, that she is solitary, ugly, blind, and universally forgotten. Your later flame, and our common goddess, the Eliza, passed a month at the inn. She came to consult Tissot, and was acquainted with Cerjat. And now to business. * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

With regard to meaner cases, these are two, which you can and will undertake. 1. As I have not renounced my country, I should be glad to hear of your parliamentary squabbles, which may be done with small trouble and expense. After an interesting debate, my lady in due time may cut the speeches from Woodfall: you will write or dictate any curious anecdote; and the whole, enclosed in a letter, may be despatched to Lausanne. 2. A set of Wedgewood china, which we talked of in London, and which would be most acceptable here. As you have a *sort* of taste, I leave to your own choice the colour and the pattern; but as I have the inclination and means to live very handsomely *here*, I desire that the size and number of things may be adequate to a plentiful table. If you see lord North, assure him of my gratitude: had he been a more successful friend, I should now be drudging at the Board of Customs, or vexed with business in the amiable society of ——. To lord Loughborough present an affectionate sentiment: I am satisfied of his intention to serve me, if I had not been in such a fidget. I am sure you will not fail, while you are in town, to visit and comfort poor aunt Kitty. I wrote to her on my first arrival, and she may be assured that I will not neglect her. To my lady I say nothing; we have now our private correspondence, into which the eye of a husband should not be permitted to intrude. I am really satisfied with the success of the pamphlet; not only because I have a sneaking kindness for the author, but as it shows me, that plain sense, full information, and warm spirit, are still acceptable in the world. You talk of Lausanne as a place of retirement; yet, from the situation and freedom of the Pays de Vaud, all nations, and all extraordinary characters, are astonished to meet each other. The abbé Raynal, the grand Gibbon, and Mercier, author of the *Tableau de Paris*, have been in the same room. The other day the prince and princess de Ligne, the duke and duchess d'Ursel, &c., came from Brussels on purpose (literally true) to act a comedy at * * * * in the country. He was dying, and could not appear; but we had comedy, ball, and supper. The event seems to have revived him; for that great man is fallen from his ancient glory, and his nearest relations refuse to see him. I told you of poor Catherine's deplorable state; but madame de Mesery, at the age of sixty-nine, is still handsome. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, December 20th, 1783.

I HAVE received both your epistles; and as any excuse will serve a man, who is at the same time very busy and very idle, I patiently expected the second before I entertained any thoughts of answering the first. * * * * * * * * * * * * I therefore conclude, that, on every principle of common sense, before this moment your active zeal has already expelled me from the house, to which, without regret, I bid an everlasting farewell. The agreeable hour of five o'clock in the morning, at which you commonly retire, does not tend to revive my attachment; but if you add the soft hours of your morning committee, in the discussion of taxes, customs, frauds, smugglers, &c., I think I should beg to be released, and quietly sent to the galleys as a place of leisure and freedom. Yet I do not depart from my general principles of toleration. Some animals are made to live in the water, others

on the earth, many in the air, and some, as it is now believed, even in fire. Your present hurry of parliament I perfectly understand; when opposition make the attack,

——*Horæ*
*Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.**

But when the minister brings forward any strong and decisive measure, he at length prevails; but his progress is retarded at every step, and in every stage of the bill, by a pertinacious, though unsuccessful minority. I am not sorry to hear of the splendour of Fox; I am proud in a foreign country, of his fame and abilities, and our little animosities are extinguished by my retreat from the English stage. With regard to the substance of the business, I scarcely know what to think: the vices of the company, both in their persons and constitution, were manifold and manifest: the danger was imminent, and such an empire, with thirty millions of subjects, was not to be lost for trifles. Yet, on the other hand, the faith of charters, the rights of property! I hesitate and tremble. Such an innovation would at least require, that the remedy should be as certain as the evil; and the proprietors may perhaps insinuate, that *they* were as competent guardians of their own affairs, as either * * * * * or * * * * *. Their acting without a salary seems childish, and their not being removable by the crown is a strange and dangerous precedent. But enough of politics, which I now begin to view through a thin, cold, distant cloud, yet not without a reasonable degree of curiosity and patriotism. From the papers (especially when you add an occasional slice of the Chronicle) I shall be amply informed of facts and debates. From you I expect the causes, rather than the events, the true springs of action, and those interesting anecdotes which seldom ascend the garret of a Fleet Street editor. You say that many friends (alias acquaintance) have expressed curiosity and concern—I should not wish to be immediately forgotten;—that others (you once mentioned Gerard Hamilton) condemn government for suffering the departure of a man, who might have done them some credit and some service, perhaps as much as * * * * * himself. To you, in the confidence of friendship, and without either pride or resentment, I will fairly own that I am somewhat of Gerard's opinion: and if I did not compare it with the rest of his character, I should be astonished that * * * * * suffered me to depart, without even a civil answer to my letter. Were I capable of hating a man, whom it is not easy to hate, I should find myself amply revenged by * * * *. But the happy souls in paradise are susceptible only of love and pity; and though Lausanne is not a paradise, more especially in winter, I do assure you, in sober prose, that it has hitherto fulfilled, and even surpassed, my warmest expectations. Yet I often cast a look toward Sheffield Place, where you now repose, if you can repose, during the Christmas recess. Embrace my lady, the young baroness, and the gentle Louisa, and insinuate to your silent consort, that separate letters require separate answers. Had I an air balloon, the great topic of modern conversation, I would call upon you till the meeting of parliament. *Vale.*

* Death or victory comes in an instant.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to Mrs. Porten.

Lausanne, December 27th, 1783.

Dear madam,

THE unfortunate are loud and loquacious in their complaints, but real

happiness is content with its own silent enjoyment; and if that happiness is of a quiet, uniform kind, we suffer days and weeks to elapse without communicating our sensations to a distant friend. By you, therefore, whose temper and understanding have extracted from human life on every occasion the best and most comfortable ingredients, my silence will always be interpreted as an evidence of content, and you would only be alarmed (the danger is not at hand) by the too frequent repetition of my letters. Perhaps I should have continued to slumber, I don't know how long, had I not been awakened by the anxiety which you express in your last letter. * * * *. * * * *.

From this base subject I ascend to one which more seriously and strongly engages your thoughts, the consideration of my health and happiness. And you will give me credit when I assure you with sincerity, that I have not repented a single moment of the step which I have taken, and that I only regret the not having executed the same design two, or five, or even ten years ago. By this time, I might have returned independent and rich to my native country; I should have escaped many disagreeable events, that have happened in the mean while, and I should have avoided the parliamentary life, which experience has proved to be neither suitable to my temper, nor conducive to my fortune. In speaking of the happiness which I enjoy, you will agree with me, in giving the preference to a sincere and sensible friend: and though you cannot discern the full extent of his merit, you will easily believe that Deyverdun is the man. Perhaps two persons so perfectly fitted to live together, were never formed by nature and education. We have both read and seen a great variety of objects; the lights and shades of our different characters are happily blended, and a friendship of thirty years has taught us to enjoy our mutual advantages, and to support our unavoidable imperfections. In love and marriage, some harsh sounds will sometimes interrupt the harmony, and in the course of time, like our neighbours, we must expect some disagreeable moments; but confidence and freedom are the two pillars of our union, and I am much mistaken if the building be not solid and comfortable. One disappointment I have indeed experienced, and patiently supported. The family who were settled in Deyverdun's house started some unexpected difficulties, and will not leave it till the spring; so that you must not yet expect any poetical, or even historical, description of the beauties of my habitation. During the dull months of winter, we are satisfied with a very comfortable apartment in the middle of the town, and even derive some advantage from this delay: as it gives us time to arrange some plans of alteration and furniture, which will embellish our future and more elegant dwelling. In this season I rise (not at four in the morning) but, a little before eight; at nine, I am called from my study to breakfast, which I always perform alone, in the English style; and, with the aid of Caplin, I perceive no difference between Lausanne and Bentinck Street. Our mornings are usually passed in separate studies; we never approach each other's door without a previous message, or thrice knocking, and my apartment is already sacred and formidable to strangers. I dress at half past one, and at two (an early hour, to which I am not perfectly reconciled) we sit down to dinner. We have hired a female cook, well skilled in her profession, and accustomed to the taste of every nation; as for instance, we had excellent mince-pies yesterday. After dinner, and the departure of our

company, one, two, or three friends, we read together some amusing book, or play at chess, or retire to our rooms, or make visits, or go to the coffee-house. Between six and seven the assemblies begin, and I am oppressed only with their number and variety. Whist, at shillings or half crowns, is the game I generally play, and I play three rubbers with pleasure. Between nine and ten we withdraw to our bread and cheese, and friendly converse, which sends us to bed at eleven; but these sober hours are too often interrupted by private or numerous suppers, which I have not the courage to resist, though I practise a laudable abstinence at the best furnished tables. Such is the skeleton of my life; it is impossible to communicate a perfect idea of the vital and substantial parts, the characters of the men and women, with whom I have very easily connected myself in looser and closer bonds, according to their inclination and my own. If I do not deceive myself, and if Deyverdun does not flatter me, I am already a general favourite; and as our likings and dislikes are commonly mutual, I am equally satisfied with the freedom and elegance of manners, and (after proper allowances and exceptions) with the worthy and amiable qualities of many individuals. The autumn has been beautiful, and the winter hitherto mild, but in January we must expect some severe frost. Instead of rolling in a coach, I walk the streets, wrapped up in a fur cloak; but this exercise is wholesome, and, except an accidental fit of the gout of a few days, I never enjoyed better health. I am no longer in Pavillard's house, where I was almost starved with cold and hunger, and you may be assured I now enjoy every benefit of comfort, plenty, and even decent luxury. You wish me happy; acknowledge that such a life is more conducive to happiness, than five nights in the week passed in the House of Commons, or five mornings spent at the custom-house. Send me, in return, a fair account of your own situation in mind and body. I am satisfied your own good sense would have reconciled you to inevitable separation; but there never was a more suitable diversion than your visit to Sheffield Place. Among the innumerable proofs of friendship which I have received from that family, there are none which affect me more sensibly than their kind civilities to you, though I am persuaded that they are at least as much on your account as on mine. At length madame de * * * * * is delivered by her tyrant's death; her daughter, a valuable woman of this place, has made some inquiries, and though her own circumstances are narrow, she will not suffer her father's widow to be left totally destitute. I am glad you derived so much melancholy pleasure from the letters, yet had I known it, I should have withheld * * * *.

LETTER XC.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, August, 1789.

AFTER receiving and despatching the power of attorney, last Wednesday, I opened with some palpitation, the unexpected missive which arrived this morning. The perusal of the contents spoiled my breakfast. They are disagreeable in themselves, alarming in their consequences, and peculiarly unpleasant at the present moment, when I hoped to have formed and completed the arrangements of my future life. I do not perfectly understand what are these deeds which are so inflexibly required; the wills and marriage settlements I have sufficiently answered. But your ar-

guments do not convince ****, and I have very little hope from the Lenborough search. What will be the event? If his objections are only the result of legal scrupulosity, surely they might be removed, and every chink might be filled, by a general bond of indemnity, in which I boldly ask you to join, as it will be a substantial, important act of friendship, without any possible risk to yourself or your successors. Should he still remain obdurate, I must believe, what I already suspect, that **** repents of his purchase, and wishes to elude the conclusion. Our case would then be hopeless, *ibi omnis effusus labor*, and the estate would be returned on our hands with the taint of a bad title. The refusal of mortgage does not please me; but surely our offer shews some confidence in the goodness of my title. If he will not take eight thousand pounds at *four per cent.* we must look out elsewhere; new doubts and delays will arise, and I am persuaded that you will not place an implicit confidence in any attorney. I know not as yet your opinion about my Lausanne purchase. If you are against it, the present position of affairs gives you great advantage, &c. &c. The Severys are all well: an uncommon circumstance for the four persons of the family at once. They are now at Mex, a country-house six miles from hence, which I visit to-morrow for two or three days. They often come to town, and we shall contrive to pass a part of the autumn together at Rolle. I want to change the scene; and beautiful as the garden and prospect must appear to every eye, I feel that the state of my own mind casts a gloom over them; every spot, every walk, every bench, recals the memory of those hours, of those conversations, which will return no more. But I tear myself from the subject. I could not help writing to-day, though I do not find I have said any thing very material. As you must be conscious that you have agitated me, you will not postpone any agreeable, or even *decisive* intelligence. I almost hesitate, whether I shall run over to England, to consult with you on the spot, and to fly from poor Deyverdun's shade, which meets me at every turn. I did not expect to have felt his loss so sharply. But six hundred miles! Why are we so far off?

Once more, What is the difficulty of the title? Will men of sense, in a sensible country, never get rid of the tyranny of lawyers, more oppressive and ridiculous than even the old yoke of the clergy? Is not a term of seventy or eighty years, nearly twenty in my own person, sufficient to prove our legal possession? Will not the records of fines and recoveries attest that *I* am free from any bar of entails and settlements? Consult some sage of the law, whether their present demand be necessary and legal. If your ground be firm, force them to execute the agreement, or forfeit the deposit. But if, as I much fear, they have a right and a wish, to elude the consummation, would it not be better to release them at once, than to be hung up for five years, as in the case of Lovegrove, which cost me in the end four or five thousand pounds? You are bold, you are wise; consult, resolve, act. In my penultimate letter I dropped a strange hint, that a migration homeward was not impossible. I know not what to say: my mind is all afloat! yet you will not reproach me with caprice or inconstancy. How many years did you damn my scheme of retiring to Lausanne! I executed that plan; I found as much happiness as is compatible with human nature, and during four years (1783—1787) I never breathed a sigh of repentance. On my return from England, the scene was changed: I found only a faint semblance of Dey-

verdun, and that semblance was each day fading from my sight. I have passed an anxious year, but my anxiety is now at an end, and the prospect before me is a melancholy solitude. I am still deeply rooted in this country: the possession of this paradise; the friendship of the Severys, a mode of society suited to my taste, and the enormous trouble and *expense* of a migration. Yet in England (when the present clouds are dispelled) I could form a very comfortable establishment in London, or rather at Bath; and I have a very noble country-seat at about ten miles from East Grinstead in Sussex. That spot is dearer to me than the rest of the three kingdoms; and I have sometimes wondered how two men, so opposite in their tempers and pursuits, should have imbided so long and lively a propensity for each other. Sir Stainier Porten is just dead. He has left his widow with a moderate pension, and two children, my nearest relations: the eldest, Charlotte, is about Louisa's age, and also a most amiable and sensible young creature. I have conceived a romantic idea of educating and adopting her; as we descend into the vale of years, our infirmities require some domestic female society; Charlotte would be the comfort of my age, and I could reward her care and tenderness with a decent fortune. A thousand difficulties oppose the execution of the plan, which I have never opened but to you; yet it would be less impraticable in England than in Switzerland. Adieu. I am wounded; pour some oil into my wounds; yet I am less unhappy since I have thrown my mind upon paper.

Are you not amazed at the French revolution? They have the power, will they have the moderation, to establish a good constitution? Adieu, ever yours.

LETTER XCI.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, Dec. 15th, 1789.

You have often reason to accuse my strange silence and neglect in the most important of *my own* affairs; for I will presume to assert, that in a business of yours of equal consequence, you should not find me cold or careless. But on the present occasion my silence is, perhaps, the highest compliment I ever paid you. You remember the answer of Philip of Macedon; "Philip may sleep, while he knows that Parmenio is awake." I expected, and, to say the truth, I wished, that my Parmenio would have decided and acted, without expecting my dilatory answer; and in his decision I should have acquiesced with implicit confidence. But since you will have my opinion, let us consider the present state of my affairs. In the course of my life I have often known, and sometimes felt, the difficulty of getting money; but I now find myself involved in a more singular distress, the difficulty of placing it, and, if it continues much longer, I shall almost wish for my land again.

I perfectly agree with you, that it is bad management to purchase in the funds when they do not yield four pounds *per cent.* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * Some of this money I can place safely, by means of my banker here; and I shall possess, what I have always desired, a command of cash, which I cannot abuse to my prejudice, since I have it in my power to supply with my pen any extraordinary or fanciful indulgence of expense. And so much, much indeed, for pecuniary matters. What would you have me say of the affairs of France? We are too near, and too remote, to form an accurate

judgment of that wonderful scene. The abuses of the court and government called aloud for reformation; and it has happened, as it will always happen, that an innocent, well-disposed prince has paid the forfeit of the sins of his predecessors; of the ambition of Lewis the Fourteenth, of the profusion of Lewis the Fifteenth. The French nation had a glorious opportunity; but they have abused, and may lose their advantages. If they had been content with a liberal translation of our system, if they had respected the prerogatives of the crown, and the privileges of the nobles, they might have raised a solid fabric on the only true foundation, the natural aristocracy of a free country. How different is the prospect! Their king, brought a captive to Paris, after his palace had been stained by the blood of his guards; the nobles in exile; the clergy plundered in a way which strikes at the root of all property; the capital an independent republic; the union of the provinces dissolved; the flames of discord kindled by the worst of men (in that light I consider Mirabeau); and the honestest of the assembly a set of wild visionaries (like our Dr. Price), who gravely debate and dream about the establishment of a pure and perfect democracy of five-and-twenty millions, of the virtues of the golden age, and the primitive rights and equality of mankind, which would lead, in fair reasoning, to an equal partition of lands and money. How many years must elapse before France can recover any vigour, or resume her station among the powers of Europe! As yet, there is no symptom of a great man, a Richelieu or a Cromwell, arising, either to restore the monarchy, or to lead the commonwealth. The weight of Paris, more deeply engaged in the funds than *all* the rest of the kingdom, will long delay a bankruptcy; and if it should happen, it will be, both in the cause and the effect, a measure of weakness, rather than of strength. You send me to Chamberry, to see a prince and an archbishop. Alas! we have exiles enough here, with the marshal de Castries and the duke de Guignes at their head; and this inundation of strangers, which used to be confined to the summer, will now stagnate all the winter. The only ones whom I have seen with pleasure are Mr. Mounier, the late president of the national assembly, and the count de Lally; they have both dined with me. Mounier, who is a serious, dry politician, is returned to Dauphiné. Lally is an amiable man of the world, and a poet: he passes the winter here. You know how much I prefer a quiet select society to a crowd of names and titles, and that I always seek conversation with a view to amusement, rather than information. What happy countries are England and Switzerland, if they know and preserve their happiness!

I have a thousand things to say to my lady, Maria, and Louisa, but I can add only a short postscript about the Madeira. Good Madeira is now become essential to my health and reputation. May your hogshead prove as good as the last; may it not be intercepted by the rebels or the Austrians. What a scene again in that country! Happy England! Happy Switzerland! I again repeat. Adieu.

LETTER XCII.

Anna Seward to George Hardinge, Esq.

Litchfield, Nov. 11, 1787.

SEDUCER! thou hast made me what I thought to have left the world without having ever been—in love with a lord. His last letter, which you enclosed, concerning his opinion on

capital punishments, has fairly done the business; and I had rather be honoured with lord Camelford's amity, than with the marked attention and avowed esteem of most other of the titled sons of our land.

Lord C.'s wit, his ease, and those descriptive powers, which bring scenery to the eye with the precision of the pencil, had previously delighted me; but with the *heart*, sweetly shining out in his last epistle, I am so intemperately charmed, that his idea often fills my eyes with those delicious tears, which, beneath the contemplation of virtues that emulate what we conceive of Deity, instantaneous spring to the lids, without falling from them; tears, which are at once prompted and exhaled by pleasurable sensations. Suffer me to detain, yet a little longer, these scriptures of genius and of mercy.

And now for a little picking at our everlasting bone of contention. Hopeless love is apt to make folk cross; so you must expect me to snarl a little.

I am not to learn that there is a large mass of bad writing in Shakspeare; of stiff, odd, affected phrases, and words, which somewhat disgrace him, and would ten times more disgrace a modern writer, who has not his excuses to plead. All I contend for, and it is a point on which I have the suffrage of most ingenious men, is, that his best language, being more copious, easy, glowing, bold, and nervous, than that of perhaps any other writer, is the best model of poetic language to this hour, and will remain so "to the last syllable of recorded time;" that his bold licenses, when we feel that they are happy, ought to be adopted by other writers, and thus become established privileges; and that present and future English poets, if they know their own interest, will, by using his phraseology, prevent its ever becoming obsolete.

Amid the hurry in which I wrote last, my thankless pen made no comment upon the welcome information you had given, that Mr. Wyatt liked me a little. Assure yourself I like him a great deal more than a little. There's fine style for you! Next to benevolent Virtue, thou, Genius, art my earthly divinity. To thy votaries, in every line, I look up with an awe-mixed pleasure which it is delicious to feel.

When he was first introduced to me, the glories of our Pantheon rushing on my recollection, my heart beat like a love-sick girl's, on the sight of her inamorato:—

> "A diff'rent cause, says Parson Sly,
> The same effect may give."

I am glad you like Hayley's countenance. How have I seen those fine eyes of his sparkle, and melt, and glow, as wit, compassion, or imagination, had the ascendence in his mind!

Mrs. Hardinge seems to have as much wit as yourself; the conversational ball must be admirably kept up between you. One of your characteristic expressions about her is as complete a panegyric as ever man made upon woman: "She is of all hours." If it is not in Shakspeare, and I do not recollect it there, it is like, it is worthy of his pen.

About the Herva of my friend Mathias, we are for once in unison; but you are not half so candid as I am. Ever have you found me ready to acknowledge the prosaism of many lines, which you have pointed out in my most favourite poets. I sent you some of my late friend's, and your idol, Davies, which you could not but feel were unclassical and inelegant in the extreme; yet no such concession have you made to those instances.

I have frequently mentioned Cowper's Task to you; but you are invincibly silent upon that subject.

Have I not reason to reproach? How should an enthusiast in the art she loves bear to see her friend thus coldly regardless of such a poet as Cowper, while he exalts Davies above a Beattie, an Hayley; above the author of Elfrida and Caractacus!—for said not that friend, that no modern poet was so truly a poet as Davies?

He who can think so, would, I do believe, peruse, with delectable stoicism, a bard who should now rise up with all the poetic glories that lived on the lyres of Shakspeare and Milton. "If ye believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither shall ye be persuaded by me, though one arose from the dead;"—and so much at present for prejudice and criticism.

As for the last sentence in your letter, my friend, I meddle not with politics;—yet confess myself delighted with our juvenile minister, of whom, I trust, we may say of his political as well as natural life, for many years to come—

"Our young Marcellus was not born to die."

Adieu!

LETTER XCIII.

Anna Seward to Captain Seward.

Dec. 7, 1787.

Is it possible that lord Heathfield should not see the impropriety of my presuming to intrude upon the duke of Richmond's attention with an interference, by request, in military promotion, since I can scarcely be said to have the shadow of a personal acquaintance with his grace!

My father's present state, the almost utter loss of all his intellectual faculties, is known. Did he possess them, impertinent surely would be an acknowledgment from him, that he supposed the duke meant any thing more than a polite compliment, by giving the name of obligation to the civility of ordering our servants to make up a bed for him during three nights, and to prepare a basin of gruel for him in the morning, before he went to the field. This was literally all he could be prevailed upon to accept beneath this roof, when, in his years of bloom, he united the occupation of Mars to the form of Adonis. I was then a green girl, "something between the woman and the child," nor have I ever since beheld the duke of Richmond. Though I so perfectly remember *him*, it is more than probable that he remembers not me; and it would be more than impertinent to presume that I could have interest with him.

As to incurring obligations, I should be very glad thus to incur them from the duke for your advantage;—but observation, and indeed the revolt I have always myself felt from officious recommendation, invariably proved to me that it injures instead of promoting the interests of the recommended. His grace would certainly be disgusted by my seeming to suppose, that any mention I could make of a relation, or friend, could operate in their favour. Disgust has a withering influence upon patronage. What is it I could say, that has a shadow of probability to enhance the duke's good opinion of a *military* man?—that man already recommended to him by lord Heathfield, the greatest general existing, whose praise ought to be the passport to martial honours and emolument. An attempt of this sort from me, would be just as likely to be of use, as if, had I been in Gibraltar during the siege, and when our artillery was pouring on the enemy, I had thrown a bonfire-squib into the mouth of a forty-pounder to assist the force of the explosion.

And, lest it should be apprehended that my poetic reputation might give some degree of consequence to my request, Mr. Hayley, who is the

duke's near neighbour, has told me, that his grace had no fondness for works of imagination. The race of Mæcenas is extinct in this period.

When my dear father was in his better days, he lived on terms of intercourse and intimacy with the marquis of Stafford. Lord Sandwich and my father, in their mutual youth, had been on the continent together, with the affection of brothers. On my publishing the Monody on André, he desired me to present one to each of these lords, expressing an assured belief, that the work of an old friend's daughter would not be unacceptable.

I, who ever thought that men of rank have seldom any taste for intellectual exertion, which serves not some purpose of their own interest; and feeling an invincible repugnance to paying attentions, which are likely to be repulsed with rude neglect, strongly, warmly, and even with a few proud tears, expostulated against the intrusion. My father never knew that great world, with which, in his youth, he had much intercourse. Frank, unsuspecting, inattentive to those nice shades of manners, those effects, resulting from trivial circumstances, which develope the human heart, he judged of others by his own ingenuous disposition. Benevolent, infinitely good-natured, and incapable of treating his inferiors with neglect, he thought every kindness, every civility he received, sincere—every slight shown, either to himself or others, accidental.

Thus he would persist in the idea, that these lords would be gratified by such a mark of attention to them; and that I should receive their thanks. I, who had been so much less in their society, knew them better; that such little great men are as capable of impoliteness as they are incapable of taste for the arts:—but my obedience was insisted upon.

One condition, however, I made, that, if they should not have the good manners to write, "I thank you, madam, for your poem," he would never more request me to obtrude my compositions upon titled insolence. They had not the civility to make the least acknowledgment.

My heart (I own it is in some respects a proud one) swelled with indignation;—not at the neglect, for I felt it beneath my attention, and had expected it, but because I had been obliged to give them reason to believe that I desired their notice.

My life against sixpence, the duke of Richmond would receive a letter from me in the same manner. Ah! a soul like lord Heathfield's, attentive to intellectual exertions in the closet of the studious, as in the field of honour, and generous enough to encourage and throw around it the lustre of his notice, is even more rare than his valour and military skill. I wish his lordship to see this letter. It will explain to him the nature of those convictions, and of those feelings, which must be powerful indeed, ere I could hesitate a moment to follow his advice, though but insinuated, on any subject. My devoted respects and good wishes are his, as they are yours, not periodically, but constantly.

LETTER XCIV.

Anna Seward to Miss Weston.

Litchfield, April 15, 1788.

YOUR letter, dear Sophia, is full of entertaining matter, adorned with the wonted grace and vivacity of your style. For the payment of such debts our little city is not responsible.

I ought, however, to speak to you of an extraordinary being, who ranged amongst us during the winter, since he bears your name, amongst us little folk, I mean, for he was by no means calculated to the meridian

of our pompous gentry; though, could he once have been received into their circle, they would perhaps have endured his figure and his profession, and half forgive the superiority of his talents, in consideration of his extreme fondness for every game at cards, and of his being an admirable whist player.

The profession of this personage is music, organist of Solihull in Warwickshire; in middle life; his height and proportion mighty slender, and well enough by nature, but fidgeted and noddled into an appearance not over prepossessing; nor are his sharp features and very sharp little eyes a whit behind them in quizzity. Then he is drest—ye gods, how he is drest!—in a salmon-coloured coat, satin waistcoat, and small-clothes of the same warm aurora tint; his violently protruded chitterlin, more luxuriant in its quantity, and more accurately plated, than B. B.'s itself, is twice open hemmed.

That his capital is not worth a single hair, he laments with a serio-comic countenance, that would make a cat laugh—and, in that ingenuousness with which he confesses all his miserable vanities, as he emphatically calls them, he tells us, that he had frizzed off the scanty crop three thousand years ago.

This loss is, however, supplied by a wig, for the perfection of which he sits an hour and a half every day under the hands of the frizzeur, that it may be plumed out like a pigeon upon steady and sailing flight—and it is always powdered with marechall,—

"Sweet to the sense, and yellow to the sight."

A hat furiously cocked and pinched, too small in the crown to admit his head, sticks upon the extremest summit of the full-winged caxon.

His voice has a scrannel tone, his articulation is hurried, his accent distinguished by Staffordshire provinciality; and it is difficult to stand his bow with any discipline of feature. He talks down the hours, but knows nothing of their flight; eccentric in that respect, and Parnassian in his contempt of the precision of eating times, as Johnson himself.

Now look on the other side the medal. His wit, intelligence, and poetic genius, are a mine; and his taste and real accuracy in criticism enable him to cut the rich ore they produce brilliant.

He knows every body, and has read every thing. With a wonderfully retentive memory, and familiar with the principles of all the sciences, his conversation is as instructive as it is amusing; for his ideas are always uncommon and striking, either from absolute originality, or from new and happy combination.

His powers of mimicry, both in singing and speaking, are admirable. Nobody tells a humorous story better; but, in narrating interesting facts, his comments, though always in themselves worth attention, often fatigue by their plenitude, and by the suspense in which we are held concerning the principal events.

The heart of this ingenious and oddly compounded being is open, ardent, and melting as even female tenderness; and we find in it a scrupulous veracity, and an engaging dread of being intrusive. He has no vices, and much active virtue. For these good dispositions he is greatly respected by the genteel families round Solihull, and (for his comic powers doubtless) his society is much sought after by them.

Hither, while he staid in Litchfield, did he often come. Indeed, I found myself perpetually seduced, by his powers of speeding time, to give up more of that fast-fleeting possession to him than I could conveniently spare.

Our first interview proved, by mistake, embarrassing and ridiculous.

Mr. Dewes being upon a visit to me, he and I were soberly weighing, in our respective balances, the quantity of genius that enriched the reign of Anne, and the liberal portions of it that our own times may boast.

It was evening, the grey hour, that "flings half an image on the straining sight." Comparing the dead and the living by *other* light than that of candles, we had not called for them.

In bolts our servant Edward, who had seen as indistinctly as I was about to see. "Madam, here's young Mr. Weston."—"Indeed!" exclaimed I, and, starting up, rushed towards the personage who followed him, crying out, "Dear Joe, I am vastly glad to see you."—"My name *is* Joseph Weston, madam." The devil it is, thought I; for the voice, and the accompanying wriggle, with which he bowed very low, were not our Joe's voice or bow.

"Lord bless me, sir," said I, drawing back, "I have a friend of your name, for whom, in this dusky hour, I took you." He then told me, that he had lately passed an evening with Mr. Saville, who had kindly assured him I should pardon an intrusion which had been the wish of years.

From that period, October last, Weston has been much in Litchfield, where genius and merit are, to the generality of its inhabitants, as dust in the balance against inferior station and exterior inelegance. Yet within these walls, and at our theatre, this finical, but glowing disciple of the Muses, passed many animated hours.

He has the theatric mania upon him, in all its ardour. The enclosed very ingenious prologue he taught Roxwell, who has a fine person and harmonious voice, to speak very delightfully.

I by no means think with you on the general abuse of the higher powers of mind, or respecting their proving injurious to the happiness of their possessor. I have generally, though not always, found, that where there is most genius there is most goodness; and the inexhaustible sources of delight that, closed to common understandings, are open to elevated ones, must inevitably tend to give them a superior degree of happiness.

Johnson's Tour to the Hebrides has been long too much my admiration, in point of elegance, for me to think, with you, that the letters from Scotland, in Mrs. Piozzi's publication, however charming, are to be named with it in the strength, or in graces of style.

So miss P—— can now say with Eloisa—

"Rise Alps between us, and whole oceans roll."

May the heroic spirit of this enterprise be as much for her happiness as it is to her honour!—Adieu.

LETTER XCV.

Anna Seward to Thomas Swift, Esq.

Litchfield, June 5, 1788.

It was more than compliment when I said I should be glad to see you. There is much interest for my imagination in such an interview. I admire your poetic genius, and I love your candour, as much as I despise and hate the insensibility of the age to poetic excellence. It has no patrons amongst the splendid and the powerful. The race of Mæcenas is extinct. We find senatorial oratory their sole and universal passion. Absorbed in that pursuit, they can spare no hour of attention for the Muses and their votaries. Never was there a period, in which the nymphs of the Castalian fountain had a more numerous train; never were they more bounteous with

their glowing inspirations. If we have neither a Shakspeare nor a Milton, it is because the fastidiousness of criticism will not permit those wild and daring efforts, which, fearless of bombast and obscurity, often enveloped by them, and always hazarding every thing, enabled our great masters to reach their now unapproachable elevations in the dramatic and epic line. Lyric poetry has risen higher in this than in any age.

Suffer me to observe, that you ought not to be discouraged by the apathy of the public taste. It is fatal to the profits of authorship; but "fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise;" and every poetic writer ought to remember, that the laurel never flourishes till it is planted upon the grave of genius;—that Milton's L'Allegro and Il Penseroso were not known to Pope till he was in middle life—so strangely had even they fallen into that temporary oblivion, whither it is perpetually the fate of poetry to fall; but, to whatever deserves that name, the hour of emerging will come:—

"So sinks the day-star in the ocean's bed,
But yet, anon, repairs his drooping head;
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky."

Mere verses, it is true, sink, like lead, in the mighty waters, never more to rise; but your Temple has no native alacrity in sinking.

Cary, literally but just fifteen, is a miracle. I never saw him, nor heard of him till after his Ode to General Elliot came out. My acquaintance with him is not of four months date. His school-fellow and friend, Lister, an inhabitant of this place, has poetic talents of nearly twin excellence. There is only a month's difference in their age. You suspect my having assisted Cary. Upon my honour, I never saw any thing of his that has been published before it was sent away to be printed. The strength and solidity of that boy's mind, his taste, his judgment, astonish me, if possible, even more than the vigour and grace of his fancy. He is a warm admirer of your Temple, and has written a sonnet to express his sense of its excellence. I hope, ere this time, he has sent it to you. I charged him to send it to the Gentleman's Magazine.

Except my translations of Horace, and some letters, signed Benvolio, in that publication, together with a few sonnets, epitaphs, ballads, &c. that crept into that and other public papers, I have printed nothing but the Elegy on Cook, which I gave to Dodsley, Monody on André, and the Louisa, printed by Jackson in this town, Monody on Lady Millar, printed by Robinson, and Ode to General Elliot. Some other poems of mine, which obtained the wreath at B. Easton, may be found in the last volume of that collection. I hate ever to think of printers and booksellers—so little integrity have I found amongst them. If I was on terms with Jackson, I would gladly order him to send you the collection you wish, but I have resolved never more to have any thing to say, or give any order, either to him or Robinson.

A set of spirited and witty essays are just come out, entitled Variety; their principal author is one of my friends. Numbers 25 and 26 are mine. Do not stare at my apparent vanity. Those numbers are not among the witty essays of this collection. Wit was never my talent.

Thank you for your ingenious prologue; but the passage on music is not, perhaps, all it should be. It confounds the distinctions between poetry and music. Of the latter the ancients knew nothing more than melody. The principles of harmonic combination, by which all the great independent effects of the science are produced, were utterly un-

known to them. We hear much, it is true, of the powers that music possessed over the passions in Greece: but, in reality, those powers were given by the poetry they conveyed, to which music was merely a pleasing vehicle. We all know that the Grecian bards, with Homer at the head of them, sung their own compositions to the harp. It must have been a simple, little varied, and probably spontaneous melody, to which so long a poem as the Iliad could be adapted. Doubtless the varieties chiefly resulted from the alternately softened tones, and heightened energies of the voice, and by the changes of the countenance. When the ancients spoke of music, they meant it generally as another term for poetry. So much yet of this equivocal expression remains, that we talk even of the modern poets striking the lyre. By that expression, you know, we do not mean that they are musicians.

Since the harmonic principles were discovered, music has been a great independent science, capable of a sublime union with fine poetry, and greatest when thus united; but capable also of giving fascinating grace and awful grandeur to the plainest and most unpoetic language, provided it is not so coarse or absurd as to force ludicrous images upon the mind, which must ever counteract all its elevating effects.

It is, therefore, improper, when we speak upon music as a science, which obtained in Handel the *ne plus ultra* of its excellence, when we seek to do honour to him, and its other great, though to him subordinate masters, at once the rivals and the friends of our poets; it is, I say, improper to confound the two arts by beginning with examples so far back as that period, in which it is impossible to separate them.

Handel is as absolute a monarch of the human passions as Shakspeare, and his every way various excellencies bear the same comparison to the pretty, sweet, lazy, unvaried compositions of the Italian school, breathing no other passions than love and jealousy, as the plays of Shakspeare bear to those of Racine, Otway, Dryden, Rowe, Voltaire, and our modern tragedies on the French model. Poetry itself, though so much the elder science,—for music has been a science only since the harmonic combinations were discovered,—possesses not a more inherent empire over the passions than music, of which Handel is the mighty master; than whom

> "Nothing went before so great,
> And nothing greater can succeed."

When I speak of that empire, it must be remembered, that a certain mal-conformation of the auricular membrane as inevitably frustrates this effect, upon even the most susceptible heart and clearest intellect, as mediocrity of talents, and dulness of perception, frustrate the effects of poetry. Where the ear does not readily distinguish and recognise melodies, no sensibility of heart, no strength of imagination, will disclose the magic of the harmonic world. Milton knew music scientifically, and felt all its powers. To Sam. Johnson, the sweetest airs and most superb harmonies were but unmeaning noise. I often regret that Milton and Handel were not contemporaries; that the former knew not the delight of hearing his own poetry heightened as Handel has heightened it. To produce the united effects resulting from the combination of perfect poetry with perfect music, it was necessary that Milton's strains should be set by Handel, and sung by Saville. Of all our public singers, while many are masterly, many elegant, many astonishing, *he* only is sublime: a superiority given by his enthusiastic perception of poetic,

as well as of harmonic beauty. I should observe, that the Rev. Mr. Benjamin Mence, once of St. Paul's and the King's Chapel, was equally great in his expression of solemn music; but from the harmonic world that sun has long withdrawn its beams. From Mr. Mence Mr. Saville first caught his energies, or rather, by his example, obtained courage to express them. Mr. Harrison has great correctness and delicacy, and some pathos; but he has no energy, and without energy, Handel can have no justice from his performer.

Colonel Barry lately appeared amongst us, but instantly fleeted away. I was delighted to perceive, that he had exchanged the languor of indisposition for the sprightliness of health. Adieu!

LETTER XCVI.

Anna Seward to Thomas Christie, Esq.

July 1, 1790.

YES, my kind friend, Heaven has at length deprived me of that dear parent, to whom I was ever most tenderly attached, and whose infirmities, exciting my hourly pity, increased the pangs of final separation. It was in vain that my reason reproached the selfishness of my sorrow.

I cannot receive, as my due, the praise you so lavish upon my filial attentions. Too passionate was my affection to have had any merit in devoting myself to its duties. All was irresistible impulse. I made no sacrifices, for pleasure lost its nature and its name, when I was absent from him. I studied his ease and comfort, because I delighted to see him cheerful; and, when every energy of spirit was sunk in languor, to see him tranquil. It was my assiduous endeavour to guard him from every pain and every danger, because his sufferings gave me misery, and the thoughts of losing him anguish.

And thus did strong affection leave nothing to be performed by the sense of duty. I hope it would have produced the same attentions on my part; but I am not entitled to say that it would, or to accept of commendation for tenderness so involuntary.

It gives me pleasure that your prospects are so bright. A liberal and extended commerce may be as favourable to the expansion of superior abilities, as any other profession; and it is certainly a much more cheerful employment than that of medicine. The humane physician must have his quiet perpetually invaded by the sorrows of those who look anxiously up to him for relief, which no human art can, perhaps, administer.

I have uniformly beheld, with reverence and delight, the efforts of France to throw off the iron yoke of her slavery; not the less oppressive for having been bound with ribands and lilies. Ill betide the degenerate English heart, that does not wish her prosperity.

You ask me after Mrs. Cowley. I have not the pleasure of her acquaintance, but am familiar with her ingenious writings. This age has produced few better comedies than hers.

You are very good to wish to see me in London: but I have no near view of going thither. You will be sorry to hear that I have lost my health, and am oppressed with symptoms of an hereditary and dangerous disease.

Litchfield has been my home since I was seven years old—this house since I was thirteen; for I am still in the palace, and do not think of moving at present. It is certainly much too large for my wants, and

for my income; yet is my attachment so strong to the scene, that I am tempted to try, if I recover, what strict economy, in other respects, will do towards enabling me to remain in a mansion, endeared to me as the tablet on which the pleasures of my youth are impressed, and the image of those that are everlastingly absent. Adieu. Yours.

LETTER XCVII.

Anna Seward to Mrs. Stokes.

Litchfield, July 31, 1796.

I HAVE not seen Wakefield's observations on Pope. They may, as you tell me they are, be very ingenious; but as to plagiarism, Pope would lose little in my esteem from whatever of *that* may be proved against him; since it is allowed, that he always rises above his clumsy models, in their tinsel drapery.

Poetry, being the natural product of a highly-gifted mind, however uncultivated, must exist, in a rude form at least, from the instant that the social compact gives to man a superplus of time from that which is employed in providing for his natural wants, together with liberation from that anxiety about obtaining such provision, which is generally incompatible with those abstracted ideas from which poetry results. As this leisure, and freedom to thought, arises with the progress of subordination and inequality of rank, men become poets, and this long before their language attains its copiousness and elegance.

The writers of such periods, therefore, present poetic ideas in coarse and shapeless ingenuity. In the unskilled attempt to refine them, they become, in the next stage of the progress, an odd mixture of quaintness and simplicity: but it is reserved for genius, learning, and judgment in combination, supported by the ample resources of a various, mature, and complete language, to elevate, polish, and give the last perfection to the rudiments of poetry, first so coarse and abortive, afterwards so quaint, and so shredded out into wearisome redundance.

That work of ever-new poetic information and instruction, T. Warton's Critical Notes to Milton's Lesser Poems, will show you how very largely Milton took, not only from the classics, but from his verse-predecessors in our own language; from Burton's writings, interlarded with verse; from Drayton; from Spenser; from Shakspeare; from the two Fletchers, and from Drummond. The entire plan, and almost all the outlines of the sweet pictures in L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, are in Burton's Anatomie of Melancholy, or a Dialogue between Pleasure and Pain, in verse, with a passage of his in prose; and these were taken and combined in Milton's imagination, with the fine hints in a song in Beaumont and Fletcher's play, The Nice Valour, or Passionate Madman.

In Comus, Milton was much indebted to Fletcher's beautiful pastoral play, The Faithful Shepherdess; but Milton and Pope, though with excellence different both in nature and degree, were arch-chymists, and turned the lead and tinsel of others to the purest and finest gold.

Dr. Stokes is mistaken in supposing Milton my first poetic favourite —great as I deem him, the superior of Virgil, and the equal of Homer, my heart and imagination acknowledge yet greater the matchless bard of Avon.

I thank you for the discriminating observations in your letter of April the 24th, upon my late publication. Milton says, that from Adam's lip, not words alone pleased Eve; so may I say, that from your pen praise alone would not satisfy my avidity

of pleasing you. The *why* and *wherefore* you are pleased, which is always so ingenious when you write of verse, form the zest, which makes encomium nectar. Mr Haley's letter to me on the subject is very gratifying: it joins, to a generous ardency of praise, the elegance, spirit, and affection of his former epistles.

Ah! yes, it is very certain, that not only some, but all our finest poets, frequently invert the position of the verb, and prove that the British Critic, who says it is not the habit of good writers, is a stranger to their compositions. When Thomson says,

"Vanish the woods, the dim-seen river seems
Sullen and slow to roll his misty train,"

it is picture; which it would not have been, if he had coldly written,

"The woods are vanished;"

since, in the former, by the precedence of the verb to the noun, we see the fog in the very act of shrouding the woods; but to these constituent excellencies of poetry, the eye of a reviewer is the mole's dim curtain. Again, in the same poem, Autumn, this inversion is beautifully used, while its author is paying, in a simile, the finest compliment imaginable to the talents and excursive spirit of his countrymen :—

"As from their own clear north, in radiant streams,
Bright over Europe bursts the Boreal morn."

And what spirit does Pope often give his lines, by using this inversion in the imperative mood :—

"Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem, rise!"

Then, as to the imputed affectation of the word Lyceum, Thomson calls the woods "Nature's vast Lyceum." For his purpose it was necessary to elevate the term by its epithet, for mine to lower it by that which I applied—*minute* Lyceum; and in neither place is its application affected. I am allowed to be patient of criticism, and trust no one is readier to feel its force, and, when just, to acknowledge and to profit by it; but to a censor, who does not know the meaning of the word *thrill*, I may, without vanity, exclaim,

"Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests!"

Have you seen Mrs. Inchbald's late work, Nature and Art. She is a favourite novelist with me. Her late work has improbable situations, and is inferior to her Simple Story, which ought to have been the title of this composition, to which it is better suited than to the history of Dorriforth: yet we find in Art and Nature the characteristic force of her pen, which, with an air of undesigning simplicity, places in a strong point of view the worthlessness of such characters as pass with the world for respectable. She seems to remove, as by accident, their specious veil, and without commenting upon its removal: and certain strokes of blended pathos and horror indelibly impress the recollection.

But, with yet greater powers than Mrs. Inchbald's, does the author of Caleb Williams grapple our attention. I conceive that he said to himself, "I will write a book, that shall have no prototype, yet the taste of the age for the marvellous shall be humoured. Female pens have given us ruined castles, tolling bells, lights that palely gleaming make darkness visible, whispering voices from viewless forms and beckoning shadows: that ground is preoccupied. Let me try if I cannot harrow readers, who have mind, with dread and breathless expectation, without exciting supernatural ideas, and even without the assistance of enamoured interests." If such was his design, the success is complete. Yet has his work many defects; and we perceive his pernicious principles to be those of an

absurd and visionary anarchist, who would open all the prison doors, and let thieves and murderers walk at large, in the hope of philosophizing them into virtue.

I learn with regret, that Mr. Mason is going to print a new work of his by a private press, for his friends only. This resolve, doubtless, resulted from disgust to the idea of seeing his compositions subject to the ignorance and effrontery of Review-impertinence, which assumes the right of supposing, that its fabricators understand verse-making better than the first poets of our age—even than he,

"Whom on old Humber's bank the Muses bore,
And nurs'd his youth along the marshy shore."

LETTER XCVIII.

Anna Seward to Walter Scott, Esq.

Litchfield, April 29, 1802.

ACCEPT my warmest thanks for the so far overpaying bounty of your literary present.* In speaking of its contents I shall demonstrate, that my sincerity may be trusted, whatever cause I may give you to distrust my judgment. In saying that you dare not hope your works will entertain me, you evince the existence of a deep preconceived distrust of the latter faculty in my mind. That distrust is not, I flatter myself, entirely founded, at least if I may so gather from the delight with which I peruse all that is yours, whether prose or verse, in these volumes.

Your dissertations place us in Scotland, in the midst of the feudal period. They throw the strongest light on a part of history indistinctly sketched, and partially mentioned by the English historians, and which, till now, has not been sufficiently elucidated, and rescued by those of your country from the imputed guilt of unprovoked depredation on the part of the Scots.

The old border ballads of your first volume are so far interesting as they corroborate your historic essays; so far valuable as that they form the basis of them. Poetically considered, little surely is their worth; and I must think it more to the credit of Mrs. Brown's memory than of her taste, that she could take pains to commit to remembrance, and to retain there, such a quantity of uncouth rhymes, almost totally destitute of all which gives metre a right to the name of poetry.

Poetry is like personal beauty; the homeliest and roughest language cannot conceal the first, any more than coarse and mean apparel the second. But grovelling colloquial phrase, in numbers inharmonious; verse that gives no picture to the reader's eye, no light to his understanding, no magnet to his affections, is, as composition, no more deserving his praise, than coarse forms and features in a beggar's raiment are worth his attention. Yet are there critics who seem to mistake the squalid dress of language for poetic excellence, provided the verse and its mean garb be ancient.

Of that number seems Mr. Pinkerton, in some of his notes to those old Scottish ballads which he published in 1781; and the late Mr. Headly more than so seems in that collection of ancient English ballads, which he soon after gave to the press. We find there an idiot preference of the rude, and, in itself, valueless, foundation on which Prior raised one of the loveliest poetic edifices in our language, the Henry and Emma. With equal insolence and stupidity, Mr. Headly terms it "Matt's versification Piece," extolling the imputed superiority of the worthless model.

* Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, consisting of historical and romantic ballads, collected by Walter Scott, Esq.—*S.*

It is preferring a barber's block to the head of Antinous.

Mr. Pinkerton, in his note to the eldest Flowers of the Forest, calls it, very justly, an exquisite poetic dirge; but, unfortunately for his decisions in praise of ancient above modern Scottish verse, he adds, "The inimitable beauty of the original induced a variety of versifiers to mingle stanzas of their own composition; but it is the painful, though necessary duty of an editor, by the touchstone of truth, to discriminate such dross from the gold of antiquity;" and, in the note to that pathetic and truly beautiful elegy, Lady Bothwell's Lament, he says the four stanzas he has given appear to be all that are genuine. It has since, as you observe, been proved, that both the Flodden Dirges, even as he has given them, are modern. Their beauty was a touchstone, as he expresses it, which might have shown their younger birth to any critic, whose taste had not received the broad impression of that torpedo, antiquarianism.

You, with all your strength, originality, and richness of imagination, had a slight touch of that torpedo, when you observed, that the manner of the ancient minstrels is so happily imitated in the first Flowers of the Forest, that it required the strongest positive evidence to convince you that the song was of modern date. The phraseology, indeed, is of their texture; but, comparing it with the border ballads, in your first volume, I should have pronounced it modern, from its so much more touching regrets, so much more lively pictures.

Permit me, too, to confess, that I can discover very little of all which constitutes poetry in the first old tale, which you call beautiful, excepting the second stanza, which gives the unicorns at the gate, and the portraits, "with holly aboon their brie." To give them, no great reach of fancy was requisite; but still they are picture, and, as such, poetry.

Lord Maxwell's Good Night is but a sort of inventory in rhyme of his property, interspersed with some portion of tenderness for his wife, and some expressions of regard for his friends; but the first has no picture, and the latter little pathos. That ballad induced me, by what appeared its deficiencies, to attempt a somewhat more poetic leave-taking of house, land, and live-stock. My ballad does not attempt the pathetic, and you will smile at my glossary Scotch.

Mr. Erskine's supplemental stanzas to the poem, asserted to have been written by Collins, on the Highland superstitions, have great merit, and no inferiority to those whose manner they assume.

In the border ballads, the first strong rays from the Delphic orb illuminate Jellom Grame, in the 4th, 16th, 17th, 18th, and 20th stanzas. There is a good corpse-picture in Clerk Saunders, the rude original, as you observe, of a ballad in Percy, which I have thought furnished Burger with the hint for his Leonore. How little delicate touches have improved this verse in Percy's imitation!

> "O! if I come within thy bower
> I am no mortal man!
> And if I kiss thy rosy lip
> Thy days will not be long."*

And now, in these border ballads, the dawn of poesy, which broke over Jellom Grame, strengthens on its progress. Lord Thomas and fair Annie has more beauty than Percy's ballad of that title. It seems injudiciously altered from this in your collection; but the Binnorie, of endless repetition, has nothing truly pathetic; and the ludicrous use made of the drowned sister's body, by the

* This stanza has no rhymes, but we do not miss them, so harmonious is the metre.—*S.*

harper making a harp of it, to which he sung her dirge in her father's hall, is contemptible.

Your dissertation preceding Tam Lane, in the second volume, is a little mine of mythologic information and ingenious conjecture, however melancholy the proofs it gives of dark and cruel superstition. Always partial to the fairies, I am charmed to learn that Shakspeare civilized the elfins, and, so doing, endeared their memory on English ground. It is curious to find the Grecian Orpheus metamorphosed into a king of Winchelsea.

The Terrible Graces look through a couple of stanzas in the first part of Thomas the Rhymer, "O they rade on," &c.; also, "It was mirk, mirk, night;" and potent are the poetic charms of the second part of this oracular ballad, which you confess to have been modernized; yet more potent in the third. Both of them exhibit tender touches of sentiment, vivid pictures, landscapes from nature, not from books, and all of them worthy the author of Glenfinlas.

"O tell me how to woo thee," is a pretty ballad of those times, in which it was the fashion for lovers to worship their mistresses, and when ballads, as you beautifully observe, reflected the setting rays of chivalry. Mr. Leyden's Cout Keelder pleases me much. The first is a sublime stanza, and sweet are the landscape-touches in the 3d, 10th, and 11th, and striking the winter simile in the 9th. The picture of the fern is new in poetry, and to the *eye*, thus,

> "The next blast that young Keelder blew,
> The wind grew deadly still:
> Yet the sleek fern, with fingery leaves,
> Wav'd wildly o'er the hill."

The "wee demon" is admirably imagined.

And now the poetic day, which had gradually risen into beauty and strength through this second volume, sets nobly amidst the sombre yet often-illuminated grandeur of Glenfinlas.

Permit me to add one observation to this already long epistle. The battle of Flodden-field, so disastrous to Scotland, has been, by two poetic females, beautifully mourned; but your boasted James the Fourth deserved his fate, from the ungenerous advantage he sought to take of Henry the Eighth, by breaking the peace, without provocation, when that monarch was engaged in a war with France. So deserve all the rulers of nations, who, unstimulated by recent injuries, thus unclasp "the purple testament of bleeding war."

Perhaps this voluminous intrusion on your time will be thought merciless; but it seemed to me that barren thanks, and indiscriminate praise, was an unworthy acknowledgment of the honour conferred upon me by the gift of these highly curious and ingenious books.

A bright luminary in this neighbourhood recently shot from its sphere, with awful and deplored suddenness—Dr. Darwin, on whose philosophical talents and dissertations, so ingeniously conjectural, the adepts in that science looked with admiring, if not always acquiescent respect; in whose creative, gay, luxuriant, and polished imagination, and harmonious numbers, the votaries of poetry basked delighted; and on whose discernment into the cause of diseases, and skill in curing them, his own and the neighbouring counties reposed. He was born to confute, by his example, a frequent assertion, that the poetic fancy loses its fine efflorescence after middle life. The Botanic Garden, one of the most highly imaginative poems in our language, was begun after its author had passed his forty-sixth year. I have the honour to remain, sir, &c.

LETTER XCIX.

Mr. Warburton to Mr. Hurd.*

Bedford-row, October 28th, 1749.

Dear sir,

I DEFERRED making my acknowledgments for the favour of your last obliging letter till I came to town. I am now got hither to spend the month of November: the dreadful month of November—when the little wretches hang and drown themselves, and the great ones sell themselves to the C—— and the devil. I should be glad if any occasion would bring you hither, that I might have the pleasure of waiting on you—I don't mean to the C—— and the devil, but in Bedford-row. Not that I would fright you from that earthly Pandemonium, a C——, because I never go thither. On the contrary, I wish I could get you into the *circle*. For (with regard to you) I should be something of the humour of honest Cornelius Agrippa, who, when he left off conjuring, and wrote of the *vanity* of the art, could not forbear to give receipts, and teach young novices the way to raise the devil. One method serves for both, and his political representatives are rendered tractable by the very same method, namely, *fumigations*. But these high mysteries you are unworthy to partake of. You are no true son of Agrippa, who choose to waste your incense in raising the meagre spirit of friendship, when the wisdom of the prince of this world would have inspired you with more profitable sentiments.

Let me hear, at least, of your health; and believe that no absence can lessen what the expressions of your good will have made me, that is to say, very much your servant.

I have now put that volume, of which the epistle to Augustus is part, to the press; so should be obliged to you to send it by your letter-carrier, directed to Mr. Knapton, bookseller, in Ludgate-street. But you must be careful *not* to pay the carriage, because that will endanger a miscarriage, as I have often experienced.—I intend to soften the conclusion of the note about Grotius and the archbishop, according to your friendly hint.

LETTER C.

Mr. Hurd to Dr. Warburton.

Shifnal, September 13th, 1755.

YOUR truly friendly letter, of the 31st past, brought me all the relief I am capable of in my present situation. Yet that relief had been greater, if the fact had been, as you suppose, that the best of fathers was removing from me, in this maturity of age, by a gradual, insensible decay of nature; in which case, I could have drawn to myself much ease from the considerations you so kindly suggest to me. But it is not his being out of all hope of recovery (which I had known long since, and was prepared for), but his being in perpetual pain, that afflicts me so much. I left him, last night, in this disconsolate condition. So near a prospect of death, and so rough a passage to it—I own to you I cannot be a witness of this, in one whom nature and ten thousand obligations have made so dear to me, without the utmost uneasiness. Nay, I think the very temper and firmness of mind, with which he bears this calamity, sharpens my sense of it. I thank God, an attachment to this world has not as yet been among my greater vices. But were I as fond of it as prosperous and happy men sometimes are, what I have seen and felt for this last month were enough to mortify such foolish affections. And, in truth, it would amaze one, that a few such instances as this, which

* Afterwards Bishop of Gloucester.

hardly any man is out of the reach of, did not strike dead all the passions, were it not that Providence has determined, in spite of ourselves, by means of these instincts, to accomplish its own great purposes. But why do I trouble my best friend with this sad tale and rambling reflections? I designed only to tell him that I am quite unhappy here; and that, though it is more than time for me to return to Cambridge, I have no power of coming to a thought of leaving this place. However, a very few weeks, perhaps a few days, may put an end to this irresolution.

I thank you for your fine observation on the neglect to reform the ecclesiastical laws. It is a very material one, and deserves to be well considered. But of these matters when I return to my books, and my mind is more easy.

I wish you all the health and all the happiness your virtues deserve, and this wretched world will admit of. I know of nothing that reconciles me more to it than the sense of having such a friend as you in it. I have the greatest obligations to Mrs. Warburton and the rest of your family for their kind condolence. My best respects and sincerest good wishes attend them. I must ever be, &c.

R. HURD.

LETTER CI.

Mr. Hurd to Dr. Warburton.

Cambridge, Dec. 1, 1755.

I HAVE to tell you, that it has pleased God to release my poor father from his great misery. You will guess the rest, when I acquaint you that his case was cancerous. All his family have great reason to be thankful for his deliverance: and yet I find myself not so well prepared for the stroke as I had thought. I blame myself now for having left him; though, when I was with him, as I could not hide my own uneasiness, I saw it only added to his. I know not what to say. He was the best of men in all relations, and had a generosity of mind that was amazing in his rank of life. In his long and great affliction he showed a temper, which philosophers only talk of. If he had any foible, it was, perhaps, his too great fondness for the unworthiest of his sons.—My mother is better than could be expected from her melancholy attendance. Yet her health has suffered by it. I have many letters to write, but would not omit communicating what so tenderly concerns me, to my best friend.

I thank you for your book and your kind letters. Mr. Balguy and I think much more hardly of Jortin than you do. I could say much of this matter at another time.

LETTER CII.

Dr. Warburton to Mr. Hurd.

I OUGHT rather to rejoice with all who loved that good man, lately released, than to condole with them. Can there be a greater consolation to all his friends than that he was snatched from human miseries to the reward of his labours? You, I am sure, must rejoice, amidst all the tenderness of filial piety, and the softenings of natural affection. The gentle melancholy, that the incessant memory of so indulgent a parent and so excellent a man will make habitual, will be always brightened by the sense of his present happiness; where, perhaps, one of his pleasures is his ministering care over those which were dearest to him in life. I dare say this will be your case, because the same circumstances have made it mine. My great concern for you was while your father was

languishing on his death-bed. And my concern at present is for your mother's grief and ill state of health. True tenderness for your father, and the dread of adding to his distresses, absolutely required you to do what you did, and to retire from so melancholy a scene.

As I know your excellent nature, I conjure you by our friendship to divert your mind by the conversation of your friends, and the amusement of trifling reading, till you have fortified it sufficiently to bear the reflection on this common calamity of our nature, without any other emotion than that occasioned by a kind of soothing melancholy, which perhaps keeps it in a better frame than any other kind of disposition.

You see what man is, when never so little within the verge of matter and motion in a ferment. The affair of Lisbon has made men tremble, as well as the continent shake, from one end of Europe to another, from Gibraltar to the Highlands of Scotland. To suppose these desolations the scourge of Heaven for human impieties, is a dreadful reflection; and yet to suppose ourselves in a forlorn and fatherless world, is ten times a more frightful consideration. In the first case we may reasonably hope to avoid our destruction by the amendment of our manners; in the latter, we are kept incessantly alarmed by the blind rage of warring elements.

The relation of the captain of a vessel, to the Admiralty, as Mr. Yorke told me the story, has something very striking in it. He lay off Lisbon on this fatal 1st of November, preparing to hoist sail for England. He looked towards the city in the morning, which gave the promise of a fine day, and saw that proud metropolis rise above the waves, flourishing in wealth and plenty, and founded on a rock that promised a poet's eternity, at least, to its grandeur. He looked an hour after, and saw the city involved in flames, and sinking in thunder. A sight more awful mortal eyes could not behold on this side the day of doom. And yet does not human pride make us miscalculate? A drunken beggar shall work as horrid a desolation, with a kick of his foot against an ant-hill, as subterraneous air and fermented minerals to a populous city. And if we take in the universe of things rather with a philosophic than a religious eye, where is the difference in point of real importance between them? A difference there is, and a very sensible one, in the merit of the two societies. The little Troglodytes amass neither superfluous nor imaginary wealth; and consequently have neither drones nor rogues amongst them. In the confusion we see caused by such a desolation, we find, by their immediate care to repair and remedy the general mischief, that none abandons himself to despair, and so stands not in need of bedlams and coroners' inquests: but, as the poet says,

"In this, 'tis God directs; in that, 'tis man."

And you will say, remember the *sovereignty of reason*. To this I reply, that the common definition of man is false: he is not a *reasoning animal*. The best you can predicate of him is, that he is an *animal capable of reason*, and this too we take upon old tradition. For it has not been my fortune yet to meet, I won't say with any one man, but I may safely swear with any one order of men, who ever did reason.

LETTER CIII.

Mr. Hurd to the Bishop of Gloucester.

Thurcaston, March 4, 1760.

My lord,

I HAD your favour of the 19th past, and about the same time re-

ceived the confirmation of Mr. Allen's recovery, under his own hand. I hope this fit is now over. But it affects me very much to think that the declining years of this good man are likely to be rendered so uneasy to him, as they must be, by the frequent returns of this disorder.

Mrs. Warburton is always extremely kind. From a letter she did me the favour to write to me after her interview with Mrs. Johnson, I find she is intent on dignifying all your lordship's domestics, as well as your footmen. For whereas the chaplains of other bishops, and even Lambeth chaplains, are usually thrust, with the other lumber of the family, into any blind corner, she invites me to repose, in state, in *the Abbot's apartment* at Gloucester. You will judge, after this, if I can have the heart to say one word against the *shoulder-knots*.

Your early intelligence of the success of Dr. Richardson was very obliging. I am glad of it, because I know it will make him very happy; and because a piece of justice is done at last upon a man, who had no regard to the decency of his own character.

Your lordship is always so good to me, that you will be pleased to hear of the health and usual cheerfulness of my mother. She is in a disposition rather to beg your blessing than pay compliments. Though, to conceal nothing, I must tell you her infirmity, that she takes all bishops for such as she reads in her Bible they should be. So that 'tis only by accident she does not misapply the veneration she professes for your lordship.

I resolve to have your Sermon, though at the expense of *sixpence*; which your lordship will consider as one argument, amongst others, of the regard with which I am ever, &c.

LETTER CIV.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Grosvenor Square, March 31, 1760.

I HAVE two kind letters of yours to acknowledge.

I am extremely glad that good Mrs. Hurd enjoys reasonable health. Her mistake about bishops pleases me the more, as an excellent woman, like herself (my mother), lived and died in this capital error.

You ought not to have excepted my Sermon from the poverty of the press. And in the dusky road towards antiquity, if it drew you aside by its glimmering, you fared no better than many before you have done, who, in a bad light, have mistaken a glow-worm for a jewel.

I am inclined to think that Mr. Allen is not likely to come to London this spring. For my part, I shall leave this place on the recess at Easter; and, if he has laid aside the thoughts of his journey, I shall not return, but take to the Bath waters; the first trial I make for my old complaint of indigestion, after having tried every thing else to little purpose.

Poor Mr. Towne rather goes backward than advances in his health. He talks of coming this spring to town for his health; in which I think he judges right; as little opinion as I have of the physical tribe.

LETTER CV.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Prior Park, November 4, 1760.

I HAVE your kind letter of the 24th past, and would not leave this place without acknowledging it. I am going to look about me in this *new world*, but am in no more hurry than some older bishops are in their jour-

ney to one still *newer*. The settlement of the court and ministry is yet perhaps as little known to themselves as to us. All depends upon the disposition of a new king, who is always the darling of the people, and who suffer him to do all he pleases: as he grows stale, they suffer him to do nothing which they can hinder him from doing.

I received a kind letter from Mr. Yorke. He talks still of the chapter of accidents with regard to Lincoln's Inn. As we are turning over a new leaf, that chapter of accidents may be at the beginning. They talk of changes in the law: but they, who talk, know just as much as you or I.

You shall hear from me again when I get to town, and have seen a little of the *carte du pais*.

Mr. Allen and family follow me in a week or fortnight. He goes to renew his contract with the government. My wife, I fancy, will stay behind, the Bath waters being now very necessary for the perfect re-establishment of her health.

Dr. Balguy is much recovered, and will leave Bath in a week or fortnight: but to return at spring. He goes to Winchester; from thence to his mother's: and from her, in March, back to Bath. His route lies near you.

All here are tolerably well, and entirely yours. With what affection I am so, you know: with what effect, God knows. But his providence, which brought us together, will keep us together. For the rest, *caliginosâ nocte premit.**

LETTER CVI.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Grosvenor Square, Jan. 6, 1761.

I AM here alone, and have been so this fortnight. But I have the satisfaction to tell you, that all the family are well at Prior Park, which I have the pleasure to believe is more agreeable to you to know, than any thing I could tell you from the great world; that is, from this great *congeries* of vice and folly.

Sherlock was much more to blame for not letting his chaplain understand early that he was a blockhead by birth, than the chaplain for not giving his master the late intelligence that his parts were decayed by time; because the bishop, with all his infirmities of age, could see the one; but his chaplain, at his best, could never find out the other.

The *Poem on the Death of a Lady* I had communicated to me by lord Holderness. You may be sure I did not slip that opportunity of saying to the patron all that was fitting of the author and his poem. He considered what I said as flattering to himself, for he acquainted our friend that he had shown me the poem; as I understand by a letter I have received from Aston, pretty much to the same purpose with the account I had from you of that matter.

In asking after *addresses*,* you ask after those *ephemera*, or water-flies, whose existence, the naturalists tell us, is comprised within the compass of a summer's day. Indeed, these winter-flies have a still shorter date. Into what dark regions mine is retired, with the rest, I don't know. But if you would amuse yourself with my thoughts, for sixpence you may have my *Discourse on the Lord's Supper*; for, as small as the price is, it is too big to send you in my frank.

On this occasion, I will tell you what (though perhaps I may have told it you before) I said in the drawing-room to a knot of courtiers in the old king's time. One chanced to say, he heard the king was not

* It is hidden in darkness.

* The Address of the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocess of Gloucester.—*H.*

well. Hush, said colonel Robinson; it is not polite or decent to talk in this manner; the king is always well and in health; you are never to suppose that the diseases of his subjects ever approach his royal person. I perceive then, colonel, replied I, there is some difference between your master and mine. Mine was subject to all human infirmities, sin excepted: yours is subject to none, sin excepted. But as concerning my Discourse, it is assuredly orthodox: so says the archbishop of Canterbury; and that I have demolished both Hoadly and Bossuet: for

"Tis the same rope at either end they twist."

The archbishop did not say this, but Mr. Pope. However, the archbishop says, what you are likely enough to say after him—that the people, for whom I intend this edition, are not likely to profit much by it.

Decay of parts all must have, if not feel, poets as well as priests: and it is true, what was told you, that Voltaire has lately given evidence to this truth. What you say of this poet's turn would make an excellent note to—*But, sage historians, 'tis your part, &c.* and perhaps shall do so.

God bless you; and, when you write next, let me know how your good mother does; that is, whether her health continues such as not to increase your cares and anxieties.

LETTER CVII.

Mr. Hurd to the Bishop of Gloucester.

Thurcaston, Dec. 25, 1761.

THOUGH I troubled your lordship with a letter not long since, yet you will perhaps excuse my appearing before you, at this time, with my Christmas salutations: a good old custom, which shows our forefathers made a right use of the *best tidings* that ever came from Heaven; I mean, to increase *good-will towards men.*

Your lordship will take a guess, from the sermonic cast of this sentence, at my late employment.—Though I am not likely to be called upon in this way, I know not what led me to try my hand at a popular sermon or two: I say *popular*, because the subjects and manner of handling are such, but not of the sort that are proper for my Leicestershire *people.* To what purpose I have taken this trouble, your lordship may one day understand. For you, who are my example and guide in these exercises, must also be my judge. If you blame, I may learn to write better: if you approve, I shall require no other *theatre.* But when does your lordship think to instruct us on this head, in the Address to your Clergy? Certainly, the common way of sermonizing is most wretched: neither sense, nor eloquence; reason, nor pathos. Even our better models are very defective. I have lately turned over Dr. Clarke's large collection, for the use of my parish; and yet, with much altering, and many additions, I have been able to pick out no more than eight or ten that I could think passable for that purpose. He is clear and happy enough in the explication of Scripture; but miserably cold and lifeless; no invention, no dignity, no force; utterly incapable of enlarging on a plain thought, or of striking out new ones: in short, much less of a genius than I had supposed him.

'Tis well you have not my doings before you, while I am taking this liberty with my betters. But, as I said, your lordship shall one day have it in your power to revenge this flippancy upon me.

Your lordship has furnished me with a good part of my winter's entertainment, I mean by the books

you recommended to me. I have read the Political Memoirs of Abbé St. Pierre. I am much taken with the old man: honest and sensible; full of his projects, and very fond of them; an immortal enemy to the glory of Louis XIVth, I suppose, in part from the memory of his disgrace in the academy, which no Frenchman could ever forget; in short, like our Burnet, of some importance to himself, and a great talker. These, I think, are the outlines of his character. I love him for his generous sentiments, which in a churchman of his communion are the more commendable, and indeed make amends for the lay-bigotry of Mr. Crevier.

I have by accident got a sight of this mighty *Fingal*. I believe I mentioned my suspicions of the *Fragments:* they are ten-fold greater of this epic poem. To say nothing of the want of *external evidence*, or, which looks still worse, his shuffling over in such a manner the little evidence he pretends to give us, every page appears to me to afford *internal* evidence of forgery. His very citations of parallel passages *bear* against him. In poems of such rude antiquity, there might be some flashes of genius. But here they are continual, and clothed in very classical expression. Besides, no images, no sentiments, but what are matched in other writers, or may be accounted for from usages still subsisting, or well known from the story of other nations: in short, nothing but what the enlightened editor can well explain himself. Above all, what are we to think of a long epic poem, disposed, in form, into six books, with a *beginning*, *middle*, and *end*, and enlivened, in the classic taste, with episodes? Still this is nothing. What are we to think of a work of this length, preserved and handed down to us entire, by *oral tradition*, for 1400 years, without a chasm, or so much as a various reading, I should rather say, *speaking?* Put all this together, and if Fingal be not a forgery convict, all I have to say is, that the sophists have a fine time of it. They may write, and lie on, with perfect security. And yet has this prodigy of North-Britain set the world agape. Mr. Gray believes in it: and without doubt this Scotsman may persuade us, by the same arts, that Fingal is an original poem, as another employed to prove that Milton was a plagiary. But let James Macpherson beware the consequence. *Truth will out*, they say, and then—

"Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, *Mœvi."**

My dear lord, excuse this rhapsody, which I write *currente calamo;* and let me hear that your lordship, Mrs. Warburton, and the dear boy, are perfectly well. I think to write by this post to Mr. Allen.

LETTER CVIII.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Prior Park, Dec. 27, 1761.

LET me wish you (as we all do) all the happiness that goodness can derive from this season.

The honour this country derives from the duke of York's visit can hardly compensate the bad news of a Spanish war, which puts the city of London in a consternation. This event does honour to Mr. Pitt's sagacity, and the wisdom of his advice upon it. Whether this war, which was foreseen by nobody to be inevitable but by him, can be successfully managed by any body but by him, time must show; for I would not pretend to be wiser than our teachers, I mean, the news-writers, who refer all

* He who does not hate Bavius, will love your verses, Mævius;

doubtful cases, as the Treasury does all desperate payments, to time.—The best thing which time (since I wrote last) has brought to pass, is the advancement of Mr. Yorke to be attorney-general. I would have you, by all means, write him your compliments upon it; for, with a high value, he has a great friendship for you. What you say of Hume is true: and (what either I said in my last, or intended to say) you have taught him to write so much better, that he has thoroughly confirmed your system.

I have been both too ill and too lazy to finish my Discourse on the Holy Spirit. Not above half of it is yet printed.

I have been extremely entertained with the wars of Fingal. It can be no cheat, for I think the enthusiasm of this specifical sublime could hardly be counterfeit. A modern writer would have been less simple and uniform.—Thus far had I written when your letter of Christmas-day came to hand; as you will easily understand by my submitting to take shame upon me, and assuring you, that I am fully convinced of my false opinion delivered just above concerning Fingal. I did not consider the matter as I ought. Your reasons for the forgery are unanswerable. And of all these reasons, but one occurred to me, the *want of external evidence;* and this, I own, did shock me. But you have waked me from a very pleasing dream; and made me hate the impostor, which is the most uneasy sentiment of our waking thoughts.

I am much pleased with what you tell me of a set of sermons *ad populum*, I mean to people of condition. For nature formed you for, and providence will bring you to, another theatre. Your judgment of Clarke is, like your other judgments of men, perfectly exact and true.

I received a letter from Mason of the 14th, and he tells me news—that your Letters on Chivalry are in the press; and he desires, when they come out, I would send them to him in covers.

Sterne has published his fifth and sixth volumes of Tristram. They are wrote pretty much like the first and second; but whether they will restore his reputation as a writer with the public, is another question. The fellow himself is an irrecoverable scoundrel.

My Discourse on the Holy Spirit grows upon me, especially in the latter part, about the Methodists, which is the part I could have wished would have grown the least. But a wen grows faster than sound flesh. I have yet printed off but 72 pages.

I think the booksellers have an intention of employing Baskerville to print Pope in 4to.; so they sent me the last octavo to look over. I have added the enclosed to the long note in the beginning of the *Rape of the Lock*, in answer to an impertinence of Joseph Warton. When you have perused it, you will send it back.

I have sometimes thought of collecting my scattered anecdotes and critical observations together, for the foundation of a Life of Pope, which the booksellers tease me for. If I do that, all of that kind must be struck out of the notes of that edition. You could help me nobly to fill up the canvass.

LETTER CIX.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Grosvenor Square, March, 1765.

My dearest friend,

You say true, I have a tenderness in my temper which will make me miss poor Stukeley; for, not to say that he was one of my oldest acquaintance, there was in him such a mixture of simplicity, drollery, absurdity, ingenuity, superstition, and

antiquarianism, that he often afforded me that kind of well-seasoned repast, which the French call an *ambigu*, I suppose from a compound of things never meant to meet together. I have often heard him laughed at by fools, who had neither his sense, his knowledge, nor his honesty; though, it must be confessed, that in him they were all strangely travestied. Not a week before his death, he walked from Bloomsbury to Grosvenor Square, to pay me a visit: was cheerful as usual, and as full of literary projects. But his business was (as he heard Geekie was not likely to continue long) to desire I would give him the earliest notice of his death, for that he intended to solicit for his prebend of Canterbury, by lord Chancellor and lord Cardigan. "For," added he, "one never dies the sooner, you know, for seeking preferment."

You have had a curiosity, which I never shall have, of reading Leland's Second Thoughts. I believe what you say; they are as nonsensical as his first.

It is as you say of Percy's Ballads. Pray is this the man who wrote about the Chinese? Antiquarianism is, indeed, to true letters, what specious funguses are to the oak; which never shoot out and flourish till all the vigour and virtue of that monarch of the grove be effete, and near exhausted.

I envy the meeting of you three at Thurcaston; while I am confined here to the assemblies of pride and dulness.

I did mention to you, I think, the insult committed on the head of the supreme court of justice. The abuse was extreme, and much felt; generally resented, but I believe by nobody more than by me, as you will see by the enclosed. I have made what I had to say, on that head, the conclusion of my dedication.* It will please neither party. I was born to please no party. But what of that? In matters of moral conduct, it is every honest man's chief concern to please himself.

P. S. When you have done with it, send it back.

* To lord Mansfield.—*H.*

LETTER CX.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

February, 1767.

My dear friend,

I KNEW you to be a wise man; but not so wise as I find you; and therefore two or three days ago I wrote you a letter, directed to your chambers in Lincoln's Inn, which I suppose they will send you. You have done perfectly right in delegating Lincoln's Inn, this term, to your assistant. Millar has just left me; and I have ordered him to write to Cadell, to send you a copy of the Sermons into Leicestershire.

I shall put off my journey to Gloucester, and visitation, to suit your leisure. I am now thinking more seriously of my last volume of the Divine Legation, and my mornings at present are amused with it. I have given a *key* to some material things in it, in one of these sermons; and some dissertations in others, that will be resumed when I publish (if I live to publish it) the last volume of that work. In the mean time, nothing can do me more honour than what you say of your sermonizing.

With regard to the many Harmonies—I have used none, nor read any; but I imagine that Le Clerc's and Toinard's must be the best; the last of which Mr. Locke speaks highly of.

As to our friend Balguy, I not long since received a letter from him from Cambridge, where he proposed

to spend the Christmas with his friend, the master of St. John's. From whence, when he heard that you was come to town, he intended to go up, and spend the rest of the winter there on a trial; so that, if it agreed with him, he would spend every winter there. He mentioned nothing of the state of his health, further than what he had told me at Bath, at the latter end of the year, that he was of late afflicted with an asthma, and that the air at Winchester was too sharp for him.

P. S. In applauding your wisdom, I forgot all my selfishness. But, where a whole letter is free from it, it may be allowed to appear in a postscript. Your absence will be a great mortification, as well as loss to us both.

LETTER CXI.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Prior Park, Feb. 24, 1768.

I AM glad to understand, by yours of the 19th, that Thurcaston promises to set you right in your health.

I do intend to write to the two chiefs in a little time. Instead of 400*l.* I have destined 500*l.* for this business; thinking, on reflection, that 400*l.* would be too scanty for the purpose. The 500*l.* being in 4 per cent. annuities, will always bear that interest. The course four years, if three sermons a year; or three years, if four sermons. So much for that matter at present. I hope, that not only my Lecture, but yourself, will be benefited, in reputation at least, by its commencing with you. Nor will you be hurried; for, at soonest, it will not begin till after the next long vacation, or with the new year.

You talk (and well) *of your golden age of study*, long past. For myself, I can only say, I have the same appetite for knowledge and learned converse I ever had; though not the same appetite for writing and printing. It is time to begin to live for myself; I have lived for others longer than they have deserved of me. I have had, from Dr. Balguy, a curious letter of what passed in the house of commons, on sir George Saville's motion for bringing in his bill for limiting the rights of the crown, by *prescription*. He was supported admirably well by our friend, who, mentioning the case of the duke of Portland (indeed the occasion of the motion), was answered, as to that point, by Norton, with a challenge to debate it then, or elsewhere; and in a manner, according to his wont, a little brutally, though of the same side, as to the main question of subjecting the crown to the *prescriptive* laws of society. The truth was, that Norton, when attorney-general, had approved of, and advised the court measure against the duke of Portland. The opposition lost the motion, but by a very small majority, of 134 against 114.

Two or three posts ago I received a letter from Mr. Yorke, in which are these words:—"Mr. Hurd is retiring to his hermitage, till Easter term: Mrs. Yorke is become an attentive and admiring hearer of him. Her good works must supply my defects."—As yours now supply mine in that place.

LETTER CXII.

Dr. Hurd to the Bishop of Gloucester.

Thurcaston, July 13, 1768.

I WAS extremely happy, my dear lord, to find three of your kind letters, on my return to this place. I

shall take them in the order of their dates.

That of the 5th, which contains the transcript to Mr. Yorke, has so much of yourself in every word, that I cannot but be tenderly affected by it. Your lordship knows how to work up an ideal picture in such a way as is likely to make it very acceptable to the party to whom it was presented.

I am glad to find that the *Life of Petrarch* did not disappoint your expectations. I must, at my leisure, look over these three volumes.

Your short note of the 6th calls upon me to wish you joy of having put the last hand to your generous and pious donation. Mr. Yorke, I suppose, will soon notify to me my appointment to be your first preacher. 'Tis true, as you say, *my own ease will be sacrificed to the occasion;* but that sacrifice would be well made, if I could hope to answer your design in any tolerable degree, and to support the honour of your Lecture; which last will very much depend on this first essay. I can only assure you of my best endeavours to do both. I think I may promise not to disgrace your institution by any extravagancies at setting out: and this caution, on such a subject, and in such times, may not be without its merit.

I now come to your favour of the 10th. The compliment from the University to our friend was out of the common forms: but his services to the body have been uncommonly great, and the sweetness of his manners makes him very popular.

Little Wat was sent back without a degree. The professor advised him to try his fortune again at Oxford, rather than return to Cambridge, as he talked of doing next term. He even told him, that success at Cambridge would not wipe off the dishonour of this rejection by his own university. The advice was good; but *the keen atmosphere* of Oxford may not agree with his constitution. It is well, if he has no better reason for taking this degree, than one of the half dozen pleasant ones you invent for him. I think it certain the two Sisters will act in concert on this occasion.

Poor Dr. Atwell's death throws a good living into the hands of Mr. Mason (for his late curate, Upton, told me it was capable of great improvement), and will, I hope, restore peace to the chapter of Gloucester. He was a man of sense and learning; but had a turn of mind too busy, and a temper too acrimonious, for his own ease, or that of others, with whom he had any near connexion.—Whom does your lordship think of making rural dean in Stow deanery?

I thank you, my dear lord, for your congratulations on my advancement to the doctorate; though I doubt it will seem a little incongruous in me to combat the scarlet whore in her own vestments. This did not JOSEPH MEDE; who should have been my example in every thing. But your lordship is too reasonable to expect either the talents or the *modesty* of that incomparable man, in your little adventurer against Babylon. After all, if I am defective in this quality, you must, in part, ascribe it to yourself, who have contributed so much to make me vainer than I ought to be: witness what you say of your portico-reading, in the close of this letter which I am now answering. But you suffer, I doubt, for your complaisance: for was not the rheumatic pain you complain of, the fruit of regaling over my *Anti-Leland* in fresco?

Accept my best wishes for yourself, and for those who are so dear to you at Prior Park and at Claverton; and believe me to have the *fidelity* you so kindly ascribe to your ever affectionate R. HURD.

LETTER CXIII.

The Bishop of Gloucester to Mr. Hurd.

Prior Park, Dec. 26, 1768.

My dearest friend,

You make me very happy in your assurance to me of your perfect recovery. Had I lived in the time of Tully, and in his friendship, as I live in yours, I should have sacrificed to Æsculapius in behalf of your honest and skilful surgeon.

You give me equal satisfaction in the promise you make, of never declining me nor my friendship, when it is convenient or useful to you.

A bishop,* more or less, in this world, is nothing; and perhaps of as small account in the next. I used to despise him for his antiquarianism; but of late, since I grew old and dull myself, I cultivated an acquaintance with him for the sake of what formerly kept us asunder. Had he lived a little longer, I should have been capable of succeeding him in the high station of his presidentship. We laugh at the wrong heads we neither care for, nor have to do with; but it is otherwise when our friends are struck with this malady. It seems poor Towne thought my silence (which was so short that I did not advert to it) was mysterious; so he wrote me the enclosed; which, together with my answer on the blank, it is not worth while to send back. I took the liberty to mention your name; for his *theme* wanted an *example*.

Ralph is now at home, and taller, better, and wiser; if not by some inches, yet by some lines. As to his learning, I leave that to his master, with the same implicit faith that a good catholic does his salvation to the church.

You now only want our dear friend Dr. Balguy's company, which, if he be a man of his word, you will have, I suppose, in a few days, and then he will be assistant in our correspondence. I desire no larger a compass than you two will comprehend: the circle will not only be large, but perfect, while one leg is fixed, and the other always running. My dearest Mr. Hurd, ever yours,

W. GLOUCESTER.

* Bishop of Carlisle, Dr. Lyttelton.—*H.*

LETTER CXIV.

Mr. Warburton to the Rev. Dr. Doddridge.

London, April 19, 1738.

Rev. and worthy sir,

I FOUND the very agreeable favour of your letter of the 13th instant in London, where I am lately come for a few days.

I can now easily forgive the *Country Clergyman*,* as owing to him, in some measure, the acquisition of such a friendship as I flatter myself, sir, to reap in you. And though you give so polite a turn to that occasion, I must never suffer myself to believe, that it was any merit in my book, but a generous indignation against an abandoned libeller, that has procured me the honour of so considerable a patroniser.

I will assure you, sir, that, next to the service of truth, my aim in writing was to procure myself the favour and friendship of good and learned men. So that you will not wonder that I accept the friendship you are pleased to offer me in so generous and polite a manner, with all the pleasure that gifts most esteemed amongst men are generally received

* In January, 1737-8, Mr. Warburton published the first volume of the Divine Legation of Moses, &c. and in March, a Vindication of the author of that work from the aspersions of the Country Clergyman's Letter in the Weekly Miscellany of Feb. 14, 1737. The professed editor of the Miscellany was William Webster, D. D.

with. Difference of religious persuasion, amongst sincere professors, never was, I thank God, any reason of restraining or abating my esteem for men of your character in life and learning.

I have read your proposals for the Family Expositor, and have entertained, from the specimen, so high an opinion of your notes and paraphrase, that, had I any thing material on the gospels, I should be very cautious, (without affectation,) of laying them before so accurate a critic, notwithstanding all the temptations I should have of appearing in so honourable a station. But the truth is, I have little of this kind on the evangelists worth your notice, and your work is already in the press: but you shall be sure to command what I have on the other parts of the New Testament on occasion, if of any service to you. In the mean time, I make it my request to be admitted in the list of your subscribers. I shall pay the subscription money to Mr. Hett, but shall take no receipt, because I would have one from yourself, in order to engage you to begin a correspondence, from which I expect to receive so much benefit and pleasure.

I am greatly indebted to you, sir, for your good prayers. I beg you would do me the justice to believe you do not want mine, being, with the utmost esteem and sincerity, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant.

LETTER CXV.

Mr. Warburton to the Rev. Dr. Doddridge.

Cambridge, April 4, 1739.

Dear sir,

I WRITE to you amidst a strange mixture of entertainments and study between the college-halls and libraries. The necessity of consulting books only to be met with here, has brought me to Cambridge; but my long nights in company make my mornings by myself so very short, that I am likely to return as wise as I came; which will be in a few days.

Before I left the country, I had the pleasure of receiving your Family Expositor. My mother and I took it by turns. She, who is superior to me in every thing, aspired to the divine learning of the improvements, while I kept grovelling in the human learning in the notes below. The result of all was, that she says she is sure you are a very good man, and I am sure you are a very learned one. I sat down to your notes with a great deal of malice, and determined resolution not to spare you. And let me tell you, a man who comments on the Bible affords all the opportunity a caviller could wish for. But your judgment is always so true, and your decision so right, that I am as unprofitable a reader to you as the least of your flock.

A friend of mine, Dr. Taylor of Newark, (M. D.) who has seen your book, desires to be a subscriber. If you will be so good to order a book to be left for him at Mr. Gyles's, he has orders to pay for it.

I have taken the liberty to enclose two or three papers of proposals, just now offered to the public by my friend, Dr. Middleton, for his Life of Tully. I am, dear sir, your very affectionate friend and brother.

LETTER CXVI.

Mr. Warburton to Dr. Doddridge.

May 23, 1741.

Dear sir,

THIS day sevennight Mr. Gyles gave Mr. Fowler himself the remain-

ing sheets, which I suppose you have received by this time.

After an extremely fatiguing journey in the stage coach, with very indifferent company, increased by worse taken up on the road, I reached Mr. Gyles's between eight and nine last night.

I have abundance of thanks to return for the very friendly entertainment I met with at Northampton, from you and your excellent lady. I must tell you frankly, you have more happiness than usually comes to the share of one man, and, to make it the more exquisite, of several kinds. Providence has treated you with a feast of many courses; which none but a good Levite under the old law, when the dispensation was exact, could fairly pretend to. That you may long enjoy every part of it, especially "that last and best—which shares and doubles all the rest," is the earnest prayer of, dear sir, your most affectionate brother and friend.

LETTER CXVII.

Mr. Warburton to Dr. Doddridge.

Feb. 14, 1742-3.

Dear sir,

I SHOULD not have been so long in making my best acknowledgments for your last kind letter, had not my absence from home, and a late unhappy domestic affair, prevented me, and engrossed all my thoughts—the misfortunes of an excellent sister and her children, by her husband's ill success in trade, yet attended to with the utmost honesty and sobriety; so that, to his own ruin, he has been a considerable benefactor to the public while in trade, and his creditors at last no losers, but himself undone. I do not know whether this be an alleviation or aggravation of the misfortune. But I can tell you with the utmost truth, that I share with this distressed sister and her children (who all live with me) the small revenue it has pleased God to bless me with, with much greater satisfaction than others spend their's on their pleasures. I do not know how it is, but though I am far from being an hero, yet I find Brutus expresses my exact sentiments, when he says to Cicero, *Aliter alii cum suis vivunt. Nihil ego possum in Sororis meæ Liberis facere, quo possit expleri voluntas mea, aut officium.** But you will reprove me, I know, for this false modesty in apologizing for this comparison; and say, where is the wonder, that a man, who pretends to be a Christian, should not come behind a pagan, how great soever, in the performance of moral duties. However this may be, I can assure you my only concern on this occasion was for an incomparable mother, whom I feared the misfortunes of a favourite daughter would have too much affected. But, I thank God, religion, that religion which you make such amiable drawings of in all your writings, was more than a support to her. But I ask pardon for talking so long of myself. This is a subject I never choose to talk of, yet I could not forbear mentioning it to a man I so much esteem, and whose heart I know to be so right.

It was with great concern I found Mrs. Doddridge so ill at Bath. I know the grief this must have occasioned you. But I know your sufficiency. I trust in God she has by this time received the expected benefit from the waters. It was by accident I saw her name in Leake's book (for then I had not received your last) a little before I left Mr. Allen's. I visited her twice. The first time she was going out to drink the waters, the second time a visiting: so I had not the pleasure of much of her com-

* All do not live alike with their relations. As for me, I cannot satisfy my wishes nor my duty in kind offices to my sister's children.

pany. You may be assured, I would not hinder her the first time; and I made a conscience not to do it the second: for it was a new acquaintance she was going to make; a matter perhaps as useful to her amusement, while she staid at Bath, as the other for her health.

Thus you see, my good friend, we have all something to make us think less complacently of the world. Religion will do great things. It will always make the bitter waters of Marah wholesome and palatable. But we must not think it will usually turn water to wine, because it once did so. Nor is it fit it should, unless this were our place of rest, where we were to expect the bridegroom. I do the best I can, and should, I think, do the same, if I were a mere pagan, to make life passable. To be always lamenting the miseries of it, or always seeking after the pleasures of it, equally takes us off from the work of our salvation. And though I be extremely cautious what sect I follow in religion, yet any in philosophy will serve my turn, and honest Sancho Panza's is as good as any; who, on his return from an important commission, when asked by his master, whether they should mark the day with a *black* or a *white* stone, replied, 'Faith, sir, if you will be ruled by me, with neither, but with good *brown ochre*. What this philosopher thought of his commission, I think of human life in general, *good brown ochre* is the complexion of it.

I got home a little before Christmas, after a charming philosophical retirement in a palace with Mr. Pope and Mr. Allen for two or three months. The gentleman I mentioned last is, I verily believe, the greatest private character that ever appeared in any age of the world. You see his munificence to the Bath-Hospital. This is but a small part of his charities, and charity but a small part of his virtues. I have studied his character even maliciously, to find where his weakness lies; but have studied in vain. When I know it, the world shall know it too, for the consolation of the envious; especially as I suspect it will prove to be only a partiality he has entertained for me. In a word, I firmly believe him to have been sent by Providence into the world, to teach men what blessings they might expect from heaven, would they study to deserve them.

I received your agreeable present of your pupil's Sermons,* with your Life of him, which my nephew has read with great pleasure, and you have both our most hearty thanks for it. He is now of Jesus College in Cambridge. But I take what care I can myself of his education. He is very promising, and I hope will prove a comfort to an excellent though unfortunate mother.

Dr. Taylor has just now shown me the first part of your excellent Answer to Christianity not founded on Argument; which he highly esteems, and we wait impatiently for the second.

Will you forgive my concluding without overlooking this sad scribble, which I should be even afraid to do, had I time. But now I have not a moment more than to conclude, with my best respects to Mrs. Doddridge, dear sir, your most affectionate and faithful friend and brother.

LETTER CXVIII.

(The first part.)

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

Sept. 4, 1716.

Madam,

You oblige your friends in the most agreeable manner in the world. You take a part in what is of con-

* By the Rev. Mr. Thomas Steffe.

cern to their interest, in such a manner, and with such a grace, as can never be forgotten. One doth not know which to value most, the head or the heart; but this is the satisfaction, that they are inseparable, and both together invaluable. I take this first minute I can, to thank you for the quickness, the beauty, the warmth, and partiality, of your last. If I am proud in the latter part of my life, yourself and another* must chiefly answer for it. Now I have mentioned warmth, you must give me leave to mention one uncommon, and hardly ever to be met with, mixture in the character of the lady I spake of in my first letter. And that is the *passion* which is often seen to accompany sincerity, inseparably joined with the prudence which is very seldom, in any tolerable degree, found with it. Without that warmth, which I have ventured to call passion, the best-meaning person in the world hath but little heart to press forward, even in what he knows to be right; and without this prudence, that warmth becomes passion in the common sense of the word; and pusheth him on to ruin his own designs. You must have seen many instances of this in life, in which a natural boldness and an imprudent warmth have been equally pernicious to the best designs. The happy peculiarity is, I sincerely think, in her I have mentioned, the warmth of an honest heart, uncapable of any but good and noble views, under the conduct of such a prudence and knowledge of the world as guards it safely from overturning them. I protest to you, I am not sensible in this, or any thing else I have said, of any partiality; unless that can be called partiality, which is a judgment founded upon observation and experience. I confess, I often promise to myself great things (I mean great things for the public) from the influences of such a combination of good qualities as never, I believe, met at court, till you carried them thither; if uncertain life, uncertain health, and uncertain favour, will give leave. But why should we doubt of favour, where there is so much reason and real profit in the continuance of it, and so much good sense to discern that reason and advantage? I wish we could be as sure of the other two. But I go to other subjects.

* The Princess of Wales, Caroline.

LETTER CXIX.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

Jan. 3, 1727-8.

——It is a long time since I had the pleasure of a conversation, which I cannot part with without some struggles. I consider, indeed, that the hours, in which I used to enjoy it, are those which are now generally better and more usefully employed, on your part, in another manner: and, I think, you cannot be too often at court, because no harm can, but a great deal of good, I am confident, will come from it. I am willing therefore to suffer some mortification, but not a perpetual one. I am a little too selfish to give up all: and hope I may still have some part in a gratification which I pursued, you know, long before the present situation of affairs; and which, give me leave to say, I still pursue for the sake of your merit; the merit, I mean, of virtue and good sense. I like you not one thought the better for your power at court; though, I own, I like the court itself the better for it. Nor do I court your friendship at all the more for that. I cannot but flatter myself, I have still some little claim to it, from my own constant and uniform regard to you, ever since I knew you, which I would call merit in myself, could I have acted other-

wise. But I have a greater claim to it. I have your own promise, given me many years ago: and I can never give up this claim, unless I appear to have done any thing to forfeit it. I have letters written from Bath in 1716, which have just now given me a fresh pleasure in reading them: and I keep them as the writings of my estate in you, which very much confirm my title to your friendship.

LETTER CXX.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

Salisbury, Aug. 3, 1730.

Madam,

It would be a very great pleasure to me to hear you are well, in whatever part of the world you now are. I left you at Windsor, where I sent to inquire after your health, but could not possibly stay to wait on you myself. I had the pleasure just to see you going into the chapel. If you saw me there, you saw me tired to death with a ceremony more insignificantly troublesome, and more ridiculous, than even I expected. I fled from the last part of it in the hall, and went a good way towards Salisbury that evening, regretting nothing but that I could not first have a little of your conversation.

I believe, madam, when you with so much warmth pressed me to write an account of Dr. Clarke, you little thought that would be made the occasion of so much reproach and bitterness, as Mr. Whiston has vented against me; and much less that Mr. Jackson, so much obliged as he was to that great man, could, so soon after his death, make use of his name to hurt me; by sending to Mr. Whiston, in order to be published, an idle, imperfect, partial, and false account of what, he was told, passed between Dr. Clarke and me, upon the subject of a prebend of Salisbury, which, it seems, he expected from me. I never saw such an instance of pious tittle-tattle from one end to the other; nor so much of the spirit of censure, and religious pride, and immoral zeal. What I see in them both confirms me in what I have used to observe, that pious, devout, and (as they are called) godly, and (I will own) well-meaning men, often do the very same things which wicked men do, and which are in them allowed to be wicked and inexcusable. How they should be excusable or praise-worthy in others; or why Mr. Whiston should think it pardonable in himself to vent (nay, in truth, to *invent*,) what it would be unpardonable in a less pious man to say of me; I am at a loss to know. I leave him to one who knows better than we do what allowances to make for such fury of religion, and desire to be guarded myself from it for ever. As I began, so I end. I entreat you, let me hear from you, if it be but in two lines, where you are, and how your health is; and believe me, wherever I am, to be, with the truest honour and highest esteem, madam, your most faithful friend and servant.

LETTER CXXI.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

Salisbury, Aug. 14, 1731.

Madam,

It was a very sensible satisfaction to me to have it under your own hand, that your health was the better for the ease and quiet of Sundon; and that it would not be disagreeable to you to be interrupted, now and then, with a line or two from hence. I ought, indeed, to have made this acknowledgment much sooner; and have little to say for myself, but that, for some time, I have every day ex-

pected to see or hear from Dr. Clarke, (according to his promise when he set out for Sundon,) and to have an answer from him to twenty questions I had to ask about you, and your health, and the place, and I know not what. A poor excuse, I own: but such as it is, joining itself with the very hot weather, (which made my head unfit for a letter to you, and my hand itself unable to do as it used to do,) it prevailed until I saw him. He is but just gone, after a stay of only a day and a half: and he has left me full of pleasing thoughts about Sundon, and the Lady of Sundon; and full of wishes to see her in her country-retirement, which, I know, she adorns. And if wish and imagination can bring it about, I am now there with you. Let me indulge the imagination: it will please me, and not hurt you. Methinks, I very plainly see you receiving your friends, with a countenance as free from a cloud, as your heart is from a spot, (much the more to be valued by those whom you think worthy of it, because in you it is so very different from what I call the countenance of common civility, due to the undistinguished rabble of acquaintance:) I mean a countenance that shows the friendship of the heart; not indeed to be described, nor so much as perceived by any, but the few that feel within themselves something which tells them what it means in another. From this image, which I can hardly part with, I go on to others. The neatness of the house; the cleanness of the little circle of ground about it; the elegance of your entertainments—I see them with pleasure, because they are not alone, but are the garniture of much greater things; and in you show a mind capable of descending, with the utmost propriety, to the lower parts of life, without ever losing sight of the highest. The imagery now goes on, and represents to me the manner of conversation with your friends, made agreeable by a quickness (not to say, eagerness) of spirit, guarded by the goodness of the understanding. The remembrance of what I myself have been witness to, makes the idea of this very strong. Sundon can add even to this the circumstance of more quiet, and less interruption from those rappings at the gate, which I have often been angry at, at London; a circumstance, I own, to me, of a most disagreeable sort.

Salisbury, Aug. 17, 1731.

THUS far I had writ last post-day, and was going on to follow you to the cottages and wants of your poor neighbours, and to partake with you in the pleasure of beneficence, by seeing the satisfaction and joy of a good mind, in being able to take any thing from the pains and miseries of the distressed part of mankind: but I was interrupted by something, (not worth mentioning,) which made it absolutely impossible to add a line or two for a conclusion before the post went away; at least I was dispirited enough to think so. I know no higher joy than that of doing good; nor can I frame to myself any more agreeable image, when I am thinking of Sundon, than that of one, who knows the art of living herself, and has the goodness to help all around her to enjoy life, as far as her ability can reach. I can add nothing greater than this; and therefore with this I will end the scene I was unwilling to dress out for myself; to make Sundon as pleasant to me as I could, at this distance, and to entertain myself with what I might enjoy, if I were there. It is the only revenge we can take of absence to feign an imaginary presence. It is some amends, though a little uneasy, when we awake and find it was a dream. Be it so: I am sure there is a foundation for it all; from

what I myself have seen, and heard, and experienced; and that no part of the picture flatters the original.

But now I bid Sundon adieu; and wish I had any thing to add, that could be entertaining to you. I desire but two lines, (I mean, if you have not time for more,) to know where you are, and how you are; nor do I design to stay for them before I write again. The cool weather has restored a little life to me. In the very hot, which we lately had, I felt to myself like a man dragging life like a chain after him; not enjoying it, but toiling for it. The worse for me, because I am not here in a retirement, to dispose of myself as I please; but open to all business, and to all comers every day equally. It is my duty to be so; and I submit to it with some satisfaction, because it seems agreeable to all, and useful to some, about Salisbury. My wife is as much your humble servant and Mr. Clayton's, as it is possible to be: and so am I. Preserve your health, and believe me to be, with the most particular regard, madam, your most faithful friend and servant.

LETTER CXXII.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

Madam,

I CANNOT forbear bidding you farewell, before I leave the town. You will pardon me. You can hardly imagine how foolish, or how sick, or how weak, I have been to-day, even with the thoughts of to-morrow. You used to ask, how much of my head I would part with for a stronger heart. If you had been to feel what my *head* has been to-day, you would have wished for my heart, weak as it is, instead of it. And yet, if you had known how it has been with my *heart* alone, you would have taken my painful head instead of it. My hand (with a pen in it) is as weak as either of them, as you may see. Why am I so different from what others are, and from what, perhaps, I ought to be myself? I know that I am going, but for a very little while, and upon no uncommon occasion. And yet, because I am parting from every thing that is particularly dear to me within my own family, and without it, though but for a while, I feel it to that excess of sinking, that I care not to attempt to express it, for fear you should think more meanly of me, than even my foolish conversation on Monday made you. Believe me sincere, and hearty in that sense; open; free, where freedom is safe, and where virtue makes it so—Believe me this—and think me in other respects as of a weak man, if you please. If I can think myself qualified for the best friendship, I shall have great ease even in a dejected condition. Dejected as it is, I cannot forbear telling you, that I had a thorough, spirituous, satirical, and resenting conversation with Mr. W. yesterday—all ending with great thanks for my freedom, and great professions.—I am interrupted in my poor scrawl. May the dearest friend I have in the world be preserved in health, and every thing that she is capable of wishing: and may I (selfish you see at last) see her once more in such a state! Forgive my hasty and uneasy scribbling, and do not forget, madam, your most faithful friend and servant.

LETTER CXXIII.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

April 17, 1732.

My dearest friend,

IF this finds you once more escaped well from the fatigue and disorder of a court waiting, it will be a

great joy to me; and I have some hope it will, because I had the pleasure to know from your servant (as I came from the chapel yesterday evening) that at least you were not ill.—The *chain of life* (of which we have sometimes spoke) has been very heavy ever since I saw you; and my heart is now a good deal wounded with the news of sir William Willys's death. He had very good sense, great modesty, uncommon humanity, and a beneficence which showed itself in a way, that but a few know any thing of. (Let me go on, and pour out a little of my sorrow, though my paper almost forbids me, and I did not design it when I sat down to write.) He had learning enough to make him acceptable to those who had had opportunities of gaining more. But it was covered by the ease and unaffected behaviour of the gentleman. Indeed, he had more excellences than most of his rank take pains to show, or to pretend to. But that which touched me most, his heart was good; and he loved me. He loved me, I have reason to say it, in so particular a manner, that he either could not, or would not, hide it. And he had that sort of tenderness in showing it, which, when I know it to be real, always captivates my heart. The last time I saw him, (which I little thought would have been the last,) after some of the most engaging discourse in his easy way, he promised himself, he said, to come much oftener to me than he used to do, since I had assured him how agreeable an interruption it would always be to me. He was ever contriving how to get his friends about him in the most agreeable manner: and when they were so, they were sure of being easy and happy. I say what I think literally true, when I say that no one could be uneasy with him. Nor do I believe that ever any one was. And though his numerous relations (some not in affluence) will get a great deal by his death, I believe there is hardly one of them who would not gladly purchase his presence again with all that they can get by losing him. As to myself, I do not say that he was to me in that rank of friendship in which one other person is. No one ever was; no one, I think, ever can be. But if I had been asked, whom of all my friends, next to that one, I would have chosen to have staid longest with me in this miserable planet, I believe, from the knowledge I had of him from his childhood, I should have said, sir William Willys. But he is suddenly gone, and in a most painful manner. Forgive this, from your faithful, &c.

LETTER CXXIV.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

——Noise, crowds, ringing of bells, great dinners, strange lodgings, company without conversation, and the like, have not made me either more in love with myself, or my situation in the world, than I was before. But they have still more recommended to me the private part of my life; the sweets of quietness, and the enjoyment of true friendship. I think often, and most agreeably, of the happiness, the great happiness, of having a friend, in whose good heart one may confide with the utmost security; and in whose good understanding one may be sure of the best advice, as well as entertainment. That there is such a person in the world, I am certain from my own knowledge. And I would now ask no greater favour of Providence, than to make me as certain of the friendship of this person. I should esteem it a peculiar happiness in the decline of life; a support under the evils that generally attend it; and all the compensation for living on, which a reasonable mind could well wish for, after the con-

cerns of our nearest relations are tolerably taken care of. You know best whether Providence has been so indulgent to me as to grant me this good; and you know what my notion of friendship is. Without the strictest virtue and honour, there is no foundation for it; nor can it, without them, be friendship; or any thing higher than company-keeping, for low or ignominious purposes. If a beneficent temper, and a readiness for good offices, be added, these also are qualifications without which it cannot subsist. But what I understand by it is still something more; a sort of peculiar sympathy, which it is hard to define so as to be understood, if it be not felt; and if it be, it needs no definition. This latter added to the former is what completes the notion of what I mean by the *word* friendship, and what I wish for in the *thing*, &c.

LETTER CXXV.

Charles James Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

South Street, Dec. 17, 1796.

Sir,

I RECEIVED, a few days ago, your obliging letter, together with the very beautiful book which accompanied it. The dedication of such an edition of such an author is highly gratifying to me; and to be mentioned in such a manner, by a person so thoroughly attached to the principles of liberty and humanity, as you, sir, are known to be, is peculiarly flattering to me. I am, with great regard, sir, your obedient, humble servant, C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXVI.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, Monday.

Sir,

I RECEIVED, on Saturday, the second volume of Lucretius, together with a pamphlet of yours upon Porson's Hecuba, for which I beg leave to return you my thanks. I had received, some time since, your letter, announcing to me the present of the Lucretius; but delayed answering it till I got the book, which my servant had not then an opportunity of sending me, lest there might be some mistake from your mentioning Park Street, instead of South Street, for my residence. * * *

I feel it to be unpardonable in me to take advantage of your civility, in sending me your books, to give you all this trouble; but I could not refuse myself so fair an opportunity of getting my doubts upon these passages cleared. * * *

I am, with great regard, sir, your most obedient servant, C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXVII.

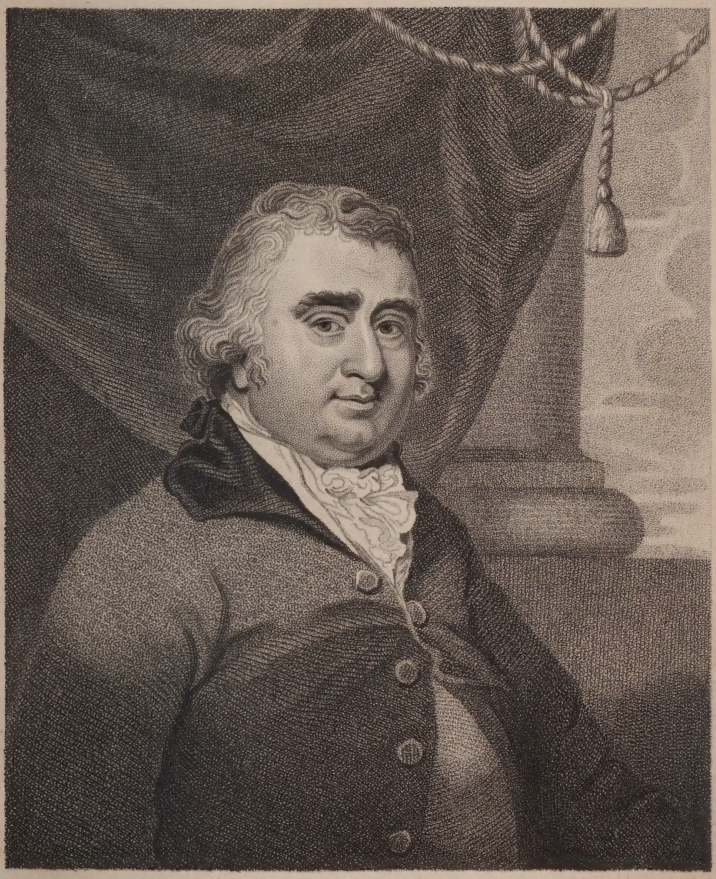
Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, Friday.

Sir,

I RECEIVED, yesterday, your very obliging letter, for which I return you many thanks, as well as for the Bion and Moschus, which I will tell my servant to take an early opportunity of sending down to me. * * *

I am very sorry more encouragement has not been given to your Lucretius; but I am willing to flatter myself, that it is owing to many people not choosing to buy part of a work till the whole is completed. Both the Latin and Greek elegiac verses, in the beginning of the second volume, have given me great satisfaction; but I should fear the inferior rank which you give to our own country will not generally please; and certainly, in point of classical studies, or poetry, to which the mention of Apollo naturally carries the mind, we have no reason to place the



Engraved by T. Kelly.

THE RIGHT HON.BLE CHA.S JAMES FOX.

Published by Samuel Walker, Harlem Place, Washington Street, Boston.

French above us. I am with great regard, sir, your obedient servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, Tuesday, Jan. 30, 1798.

Sir,

I HAVE received the third volume of your magnificent and beautiful Lucretius, for which I take the earliest opportunity of returning you my thanks. I cannot help flattering myself, that, now the work is complete, it will be far more patronised than it has hitherto been: but, it must be allowed, that these times are not favourable to expensive purchases of any kind; and I fear, also, that we may add, that the political opinions we profess are far from being a recommendation to general favour, among those, at least, in whose power it is to patronise a work like yours.

I am at present rather engaged in reading Greek; as it is my wish to recover, at least, if not to improve, my former acquaintance (which was but slight) with that language: but it will not be long before I enter regularly upon your Lucretius; and, when I do, if I should find any difficulties which your notes do not smooth, I shall take the liberty of troubling you for further information; presuming upon the obliging manner in which you satisfied some doubts of mine, upon a former occasion. I am, with great regard, sir, your obedient servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXIX.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, Feb. 2, 1798.

Sir,

IT is an instance of my forgetfulness, but I really thought I had acknowledged the receipt of the publications which you were so good as to send me. Excepting the Pope, which I have not yet looked into, I read the rest with great pleasure; and quite agree with you, that Bryant has made no case at all upon the subject of the Trojan war. I cannot refuse myself taking this opportunity of asking your opinion, relative to the 24th Iliad, whether or not it is Homer's? If it is, I think the passage about Paris and the Goddesses must be an interpolation: and if it is not, by denying Homer the glory of Priam's expedition from Troy, and interview with Achilles, we take from him the most shining passages, perhaps, in all his works. I am, sir, your obedient humble servant,

C. J. Fox.

P. S. Though I have not begun to read Lucretius regularly, yet I have *dipped* in it sufficiently to have no apprehension of quoting the line of Phædrus. I think the elegiac verses to the poet are very classical and elegant indeed; and, you know, we Etonians hold ourselves (I do not know whether or not others agree with us) of some authority in matters of this sort.

LETTER CXXX.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, Feb. 16, 1798.

Sir,

I SHOULD have been exceedingly sorry, if, in all the circumstances you mention, you had given yourself the trouble of writing me your thoughts upon Homer's poetry; indeed, in no circumstances should I have been indiscreet enough to make a request so exorbitant; in the present, I should be concerned if you were to think of attending even to my limited question, respecting the authenti-

city of the 24th Iliad, or to any thing but your own business.

I am sorry your work is to be prosecuted; because, though I have no doubt of a prosecution failing, yet I fear it may be very troublesome to you. If, either by advice or otherwise, I can be of any service to you, it will make me very happy; and I beg you to make no scruple about applying to me: but I do not foresee that I can, in any shape, be of any use, unless it should be in pressing others, whom you may think fit to consult, to give every degree of attention to your cause. I suppose there can be little or no difficulty in removing, as you wish it, the difficulty from the publisher to yourself; for to prosecute a printer, who is willing to give up his author, would be a very unusual, and certainly a very odious, measure.

I have looked at the three passages you mention, and am much pleased with them: I think "curalium," in particular, a very happy conjecture; for neither "cœruleum" nor "beryllum" can, I think, be right; and there certainly is a tinge of red in the necks of some of the dove species. After all, the Latin words for colours are very puzzling: for, not to mention "purpura," which is evidently applied to three different colours at least—scarlet, porphyry, and what we call purple, that is, amethyst, and possibly to many others—the chapter of Aulus Gellius, to which you refer, has always appeared to me to create many more difficulties than it removes; and most especially that passage which you quote, "virides equos." I can conceive that a poet might call a horse "viridis," though I should think the term rather forced; but Aulus Gellius says, that Virgil gives the appellation of "glauci," rather than "cœrulei," to the *virides equos*, and consequently uses *virides*, not as if it were a poetical or figurative way of describing a certain colour of horses, but as if it were the usual and most generally intelligible term. Now, what colour usual to horses could be called *viridis*, is difficult to conceive; and the more so, because there are no other Latin and English words for colours, which we have such good grounds for supposing corresponding one to the other as *viridis* and *green*, on account of grass, trees, &c. &c. However, these are points which may be discussed by us, as you say, at leisure, if the system of tyranny should proceed to its maturity. Whether it will or not, I know not; but, if it should, sure I am, that to have so cultivated literature as to have laid up a store of consolation and amusement, will be, in such an event, the greatest advantage (next to a good conscience) which one man can have over another. My judgment, as well as my wishes, leads me to think, that we shall not experience such dreadful times as you suppose possible; but, if we do not, what has passed in Ireland is a proof, that it is not to the moderation of our governors that we shall be indebted for whatever portion of ease or liberty may be left us. I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXI.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, Feb. 23, 1798.

Sir,

NOTHING, but your stating yourself to be in some degree at leisure now, could justify my troubling you with the long, and, perhaps, unintelligible scrawl which I send with this. I most probably have shown much ignorance, and certainly some presumption, in seeming to dispute with you upon points, of which you know

so much, and I so little: all I can say in my defence is, that disputing is sometimes a way of learning.

I have not said any thing yet upon the question which you seem to have thought most upon—whether the Iliad is the work of one or more authors? I have, for the sake of argument, admitted it; but yet, I own, I have great doubts, and even lean to an opinion different from yours. I am sure the inequality of excellence is not greater than in "Paradise Lost," and many other poems written confessedly by one author. I will own to you, also, that in one only of the instances of inequality which you state, I agree with you. Atè is detestable; but I cannot think as you do of the death of Hector.—There are parts of that book, and those closely connected with the death of Hector, which I cannot help thinking equal to any thing.

It is well for you that my paper is at an end, and that I have not the conscience to take a new sheet. Your humble servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXII.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, March 16, 1798.

Sir,

* * * * * * *

I am very much concerned at your Lucretius meeting with so little encouragement as you say; and I feel the more, because I cannot help thinking, that part of the prejudice, which occasions so unaccountable a neglect, is imputable to the honour you have done me by the dedication of it—an honour, I assure you, that I shall always most highly value. I am, sir, yours ever,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXIII.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, March 1, 1799.

Sir,

Although I am wholly without any resources, even of advice, and much more of power, to offer you my services upon the present occasion, yet I cannot help troubling you with a few lines, to tell you how very sincerely concerned I am at the event of your trial.

The liberty of the press I considered as virtually destroyed by the proceedings against Johnson and Jordan; and what has happened to you I cannot but lament therefore the more, as the sufferings of a man whom I esteem, in a cause that is no more.

I have been reading your Lucretius, and have nearly finished the second volume: it appears to me to be by far the best publication of any classical author: and if it is an objection with some persons, that the great richness and variety of quotation and criticism in the notes takes off, in some degree, the attention from the text, I am not one of those, who will ever complain of an editor for giving me too much instruction and amusement. I am, with great regard, and all possible good wishes, sir, your most obedient servant,

C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXIV.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, June 9, 1799.

Sir,

Nothing could exceed the concern I felt at the extreme severity (for such it appears to me) of the sentence pronounced against you.

I should be apprehensive, that the distance of Dorchester must add con-

siderably to the difficulties of your situation: but should be very glad to learn from you that it is otherwise.

If any of your friends can think of any plan for you, by which some of the consequences of your confinement may be in any degree lessened, I should be very happy to be in any way assisting in it. From some words that dropped from you, when I saw you, I rather understood that you did not feel much inclination to apply to your usual studies in your present situation; otherwise it had occurred to me, that some publication, on a less expensive plan than the Lucretius, and by subscription, might be eligible, for the purpose of diverting your mind, and for serving your family; but of this you are the best judge; and all I can say is, that I shall always be happy to show the esteem and regard with which I am, sir, your most obedient servant, C. J. Fox.

Rev. GILBERT WAKEFIELD,
King's Bench Prison.

LETTER CXXXV.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, June 12, 1799.

Sir,

I RETURN you your friend's letter, which gave me great satisfaction. The sentence upon lord Thanet and Ferguson is, all things considered, most abominable; but the speech accompanying it is, if possible, worse.

I think a Lexicon in Greek and English is a work much wanted; and, if you can have patience to execute such a work, I shall consider it a great benefit to the cause of literature. I hope to hear from you, that your situation at Dorchester is not worse, at least, than you expected; and, when I know you to be in a state of perfect ease of mind (which at this moment could not be expected), I will, with your leave, state to you a few observations, which I just hinted to you when I saw you, upon Porson's note to his Orestes, regarding the final ν. I am, with great regard, sir, yours ever, C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXVI.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, June 27, 1799.

Sir,

IN consequence of a letter, which lord Holland showed me, I have written to lord Shaftesbury, and to lord Ilchester, who are both very humane men, and would, I should hope, be happy to do any thing that may make your situation less uneasy. I am, sir, yours ever, C. J. Fox.

LETTER CXXXVII.

Mr. Fox to Mr. Wakefield.

St. Anne's Hill, April 28, 1801.

Sir,

I AM much obliged to you for your caution about Heyne's Virgil; and, if I purchase it at all, I will wait for the new edition. When I was a book-buyer, in my younger days, it was not in existence; and lately I have bought but few classical books, except Greek ones; and some Latin authors, of whom I had before *no* valuable edition. I had once a good many editions of Virgil; but, having had frequent occasions to make presents, and Virgil being always a proper book for that purpose, I have now only the fine Roman one, in three volumes folio; a school Delphin; a Variorum; and Martyn's Georgics. I am glad to find that you are not the heretic about the fourth book that I suspected you to be. Your notion, in respect to poets borrowing from

each other, seems almost to come up to mine, who have often been laughed at by my friends as a systematic defender of plagiarism: indeed, I got lord Holland, when a school-boy, to write some verses in praise of it; and, in truth, it appears to me, that the greatest poets have been most guilty, if guilt there be, in these matters. Dido is surely far superior to Medea in general. Your observation on the utility of communications upon these subjects may possibly be the cause of my making many trifling ones upon them. The loss of the older Roman writers is certainly the greatest that could have happened to philology; and probably, too, on account of their own merit, is in every view a considerable one. Of the more modern writers whom you mention, I have never read any but A. Gellius. I bought Apuleius last year, with an intention to read him, but something or other has always prevented me. I never saw one quotation from Tertullian that did not appear to me full of eloquence of the best sort; and have often thought, on that account, of buying an edition of him: but have been rather discouraged, from supposing that it might be necessary to know more than I do of the controversies in which he was engaged, to relish him properly.

With respect to your lectures, I should think that Latin would succeed better than Greek authors; but this is very uncertain. From the audience, however, which you may have upon the first, it will not be difficult to collect what probability there is of getting as good, or a better one, to the second.

It would be very good in argument, to state the inefficacy of the petitions on the slave trade, in the way you mention; and I do believe, that, in fact, the supposed inefficacy of petitions has been one of the great causes of the supineness, or rather lethargy, of the country: but it is not true, that petitions, though they have been ultimately unsuccessful, have been therefore wholly inefficacious. The petitions in 1797 produced, as Mr. Pitt says (and I suspect he says truly), the negotiation at Lisle: no great good, you will say; but still they were not wholly inefficacious. And even with regard to the slave trade, I conceive the great numbers which have voted with us, sometimes amounting to a majority, have been principally owing to petitions. Even now, in this last stage of degradation, I am not sure that if the people were to petition generally (but it must be very generally), that it would be without effect.

Your attention to the unfortunate wretches you speak of* must do you the highest honour in the eyes of all men, even of tory justices; and that is saying (a bold word) θαρσαλεον επος.

Yours ever, C. J. Fox.

* His fellow prisoners.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

RECENT LETTERS.

SECTION IV.

FROM THE LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE, EARL OF ORFORD, H. K. WHITE, AND LORD BYRON.

LETTER I.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard West, Esq.*

Paris, April 21, N. S. 1739.

Dear West,

You figure us in a set of pleasures, which, believe me, we do not find: cards and eating are so universal, that they absorb all variation of pleasures. The operas indeed are much frequented three times a week; but to me they would be a greater penance than eating maigre: their music resembles a gooseberry tart as much as it does harmony. We have not yet been at the Italian playhouse; scarce any one goes there. Their best amusement, and which in some parts beats ours, is the comedy; three or four of the actors excel any we have: but then to this nobody goes, if it is not one of the fashionable nights, and then they go, be the play good or bad—except on Moliere's nights, whose pieces they are quite weary of. Gray and I have been at the Avare to-night: I cannot at all commend their performance of it. Last night I was in the Place de Louis le Grand (a regular octagon, uniform, and the houses handsome, though not so large as Golden Square), to see what they reckoned one of the finest burials that ever was in France. It was the duke de Tresmes, governor of Paris and marshal of France. It began on foot from his palace to his parish church, and from thence in coaches to the opposite end of Paris, to be interred in the church of the Celestins, where is his family vault. About a week ago we happened to see the grave digging, as we went to see the church, which is old and small, but fuller of fine ancient monuments than any except St. Denis, which we saw on the road, and excels Westminster; for the windows are all painted in mosaic, and the tombs as fresh and well preserved as if they were of yesterday. In the Celestins' church is a votive column to Francis II, which says, that it is one assurance of his being immortalized, to have had the martyr Mary Stuart for his

* Afterwards earl of Orford.

wife.—After this long digression I return to the burial, which was a most vile thing. A long procession of flambeaux and friars; no plumes, trophies, banners, led horses, scutcheons, or open chariots; nothing but

Friars,
White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.

This goodly ceremony began at nine at night, and did not finish till three this morning; for, each church they passed, they stopped for a hymn and holy water. By the bye, some of these choice monks, who watched the body while it lay in state, fell asleep one night, and let the tapers catch fire of the rich velvet mantle, lined with ermine, and powdered with gold flower-de-luces, which melted the lead coffin, and burnt off the feet of the deceased before it wakened them. The French love show; but there is a meanness reigns through it all. At the house where I stood to see this procession, the room was hung with crimson damask and gold, and the windows were mended in ten or a dozen places with paper. At dinner they give you three courses; but a third of the dishes is patched up with salads, butter, puff-paste, or some such miscarriage of a dish. None but Germans wear fine clothes; but their coaches are tawdry enough for the wedding of Cupid and Psyche. You would laugh extremely at their signs; some live at the Y grec, some at Venus's toilette, and some at the sucking cat. You would not easily guess their notions of honour: I'll tell you one: it is very dishonourable for any gentleman not to be in the army, or in the king's service, as they call it, and it is no dishonour to keep public gaming houses; there are at least an hundred and fifty people, of the first quality in Paris, who live by it. You may go into their houses at all hours of the night, and find hazard, pharaoh, &c. The men who keep the hazard-table at the duke de Gesvres' pay him twelve guineas each night for the privilege. Even the princesses of the blood are dirty enough to have shares in the banks kept at their houses. We have seen two or three of them; but they are not young, nor remarkable but for wearing their red of a deeper dye than other women, though all use it extravagantly.

The weather is still so bad, that we have not made any excursions to see Versailles and the environs, not even walked in the Thuilleries; but we have seen almost every thing else that is worth seeing in Paris, though that is very considerable. They beat us vastly in buildings, both in number and magnificence. The tombs of Richelieu and Mazarine at the Sorbonne and the College de Quatre Nations are wonderfully fine, especially the former. We have seen very little of the people themselves, who are not inclined to be propitious to strangers, especially if they do not play, and speak the language readily. If we did not remember there was such a place as England, we should know nothing of it: the French never mention it, unless it happens to be in one of their proverbs. Adieu! Yours ever.

LETTER II.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard West, Esq.

From Paris, 1739.

Dear West,

I SHOULD think myself to blame not to try to divert you, when you tell me I can. From the air of your letter you seem to want amusement, that is, you want spirits. I would recommend to you certain little employments that I know of, and that belong to you, but that I imagine bodily exercise is more suitable to your complaint. If you would pro-

mise me to read them in the Temple garden, I would send you a little packet of plays and pamphlets that we have made up, and intend to despatch to Dick's the first opportunity.—Stand by, clear the way, make room for the pompous appearance of Versailles le grand!—But no; it fell so short of my idea of it, mine, that I have resigned to Gray the office of writing its panegyric. He likes it. They say I am to like it better next Sunday; when the sun is to shine, the king is to be fine, the water-works are to play, and the new knights of the Holy Ghost are to be installed! Ever since Wednesday, the day we were there, we have done nothing but dispute about it. They say, we did not see it to advantage, that we ran through the apartments, saw the garden *en passant*, and slabbered over Trianon. I say, we saw nothing. However, we had time to see that the great front is a lumber of littlenesses, composed of black brick, stuck full of bad old busts, and fringed with gold rails. The rooms are all small, except the great gallery, which is noble, but totally wainscoted with looking glass. The garden is littered with statues and fountains, each of which has its tutelary deity. In particular, the elementary god of fire solaces himself in one. In another, Enceladus, in lieu of a mountain, is overwhelmed with many waters. There are avenues of water-pots, who disport themselves much in squirting up cascadelins. In short, 'tis a garden for a great child. Such was Louis Quatorze, who is here seen in his proper colours, where he commanded in person, unassisted by his armies and generals, and left to the pursuit of his own puerile ideas of glory.

We saw last week a place of another kind, and which has more the air of what it would be, than any thing I have yet met with: it was the convent of the Chartreux. All the conveniences, or rather (if there was such a word) all the *adaptments*, are assembled here, that melancholy, meditation, selfish devotion, and despair would require. But yet 'tis pleasing. Soften the terms, and mellow the uncouth horror that reigns here, but a little, and 'tis a charming solitude. It stands on a large space of ground, is old and irregular. The chapel is gloomy: behind it, through some dark passages, you pass into a large obscure hall, which looks like a combination-chamber for some hellish council. The large cloister surrounds their burying-ground. The cloisters are very narrow, and very long, and let in to the cells, which are built like little huts detached from each other. We were carried into one, where lived a middle-aged man, not long initiated into the order. He was extremely civil, and called himself Dom Victor. We have promised to visit him often. Their habit is all white; but besides this, he was infinitely clean in his person; and his apartment and garden, which he keeps and cultivates without any assistance, was neat to a degree. He has four little rooms, furnished in the prettiest manner, and hung with good prints. One of them is a library, and another a gallery. He has several Canary birds disposed in a pretty manner in breeding cages. In his garden was a bed of good tulips in bloom, flowers and fruit trees, and all neatly kept. They are permitted at certain hours to talk to strangers, but never to one another, or to go out of their convent. But what we chiefly went to see was the small cloister, with the history of St. Bruno, their founder, painted by Le Sœur. It consists of twenty-two pictures, the figures a good deal less than life. But sure they are amazing! I don't know what Raphael may be in Rome, but these pictures excel all I have seen in Paris and England. The figure of the dead

man, who spoke at his burial, contains all the strongest and horridest ideas of ghastliness, hypocrisy discovered, and the height of damnation, pain and cursing. A Benedictine monk, who was there at the same time, said to me of this picture; *C'est une fable, mais on la croyoit autrefois.** Another, who showed me relics in one of their churches, expressed as much ridicule for them. The pictures I have been speaking of are ill preserved, and some of the finest heads defaced, which was done at first by a rival of Le Sœur's. Adieu, dear West; take care of your health; and some time or other we will talk over all these things with more pleasure than I have had in seeing them. Yours ever.

LETTER III.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard West, Esq.

From a Hamlet among the mountains of Savoy, Sept. 28, 1739, N. S.

PRECIPICES, mountains, torrents, wolves, rumblings, Salvator Rosa—the pomp of our park, and the meekness of our palace! Here we are, the lonely lords of glorious desolate prospects. I have kept a sort of resolution which I made of not writing to you as long as I staid in France: I am now a quarter of an hour out of it, and write to you. Mind, 'tis three months since we heard from you. I begin this letter among the clouds; where I shall finish, my neighbour heaven probably knows; 'tis an odd wish in a mortal letter, to hope not to finish it on this side the atmosphere. You will have a billet tumble to you from the stars when you least think of it: and that I should write it too! Lord, how potent that sounds! But I am to undergo many transmigrations before I come to "yours ever." Yesterday I was a shepherd of Dauphiné; to-day an Alpine savage; to-morrow a Carthusian monk; and Friday a Swiss Calvinist. I have one quality which I find remains with me in all worlds and in all æthers; I brought it with me from your world, and am admired for it in this; 'tis my esteem for you; this is a common thought among you, and you will laugh at it, but it is new here; as new to remember one's friends in the world one has left, as for you to remember those you have lost.

* It is a fable, but they believed it once.

Aix in Savoy, Sept. 30th.

We are this minute come in here, and here's an awkward abbé this minute come in to us. I asked him if he would sit down. *Oui, oui, oui.* He has ordered us a radish soup for supper, and has brought a chessboard to play with Mr. Conway. I have left 'em in the act, and am set down to write to you. Did you ever see any thing like the prospect we saw yesterday? I never did. We rode three leagues to see the Grande Chartreuse; expected bad roads, and the finest convent in the kingdom. We were disappointed pro and con. The building is large and plain, and has nothing remarkable but its primitive simplicity: they entertained us in the neatest manner, with eggs, pickled salmon, dried fish, conserves, cheese, butter, grapes, and figs, and pressed us mightily to lie there. We tumbled into the hands of a lay brother, who, unluckily having the charge of the meal and bran, showed us little besides. * * *

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But the road, West, the road! winding round a prodigious mountain, and surrounded with others all shagged with hanging woods, obscured with pines or lost in clouds! Below,

a torrent breaking through cliffs, and tumbling through fragments of rocks! Sheets of cascades forcing their silver speed down channelled precipices, and hasting into the roughened river at the bottom! Now and then an old foot-bridge, with a broken rail, a leaning cross, a cottage, or the ruin of an hermitage! This sounds too bombast and too romantic to one that has not seen it, too cold for one that has. If I could send you my letter post between two lovely tempests that echoed each other's wrath, you might have some idea of this noble roaring scene, as you were reading it. Almost on the summit, upon a fine verdure, but without any prospect, stands the Chartreuse. We staid there two hours, rode back through this charming picture, wished for a painter, wished to be poets! Need I tell you we wished for you? Good night! Yours ever.

LETTER IV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard West, Esq.

Florence, February 27, 1740, N. S.

WELL, West, I have found a little unmasked moment to write to you; but for this week past I have been so muffled up in my domino, that I have not had the command of my elbows. But what have you been doing all the mornings? Could you not write then? No; then I was masked too; I have done nothing but slip out of my domino into bed, and out of bed into my domino. The end of the Carnival is frantic, bacchanalian; all the morn one makes parties in mask to the shops and coffee-houses, and all the evening to the operas and balls. *Then I have danced, good gods, how I have danced!* The Italians are fond to a degree of our country dances: *Cold and raw* they only know by the tune; *Blowzy-bella* is almost Italian, and *Buttered peas* is *Pizelli al buro.* There are but three days more; but the two last are to have balls all the morning at the fine unfinished palace of the Strozzi; and the Tuesday night a masquerade after supper; they sup first, to eat *gras*, and not encroach upon Ash-Wednesday. What makes masquerading more agreeable here than in England, is the great deference that is showed to the disguised. Here they do not catch at those little dirty opportunities of saying any ill-natured thing they know of you, do not abuse you because they may, or talk indecently to a woman of quality. I found the other day, by a play of Etheridge's, that we have had a sort of Carnival even since the Reformation; 'tis in *She would if She could*, they talk of going a-mumming in Shrove-tide.—After talking so much of diversions, I fear you will attribute to them the fondness I own I contract for Florence; but it has so many other charms, that I shall not want excuses for my taste. The freedom of the Carnival has given me opportunities to make several acquaintances; and if I have not found them refined, learned, polished, like some other cities, yet they are civil, good-natured, and fond of the English. Their little partiality for themselves, opposed to the violent vanity of the French, makes them very amiable in my eyes. I can give you a comical instance of their great prejudice about nobility; it happened yesterday. While we were at dinner at Mr. Mann's, word was brought by his secretary, that a cavalier demanded audience of him upon an affair of honour. Gray and I flew behind the curtain of the door. An elderly gentleman, whose attire was not certainly correspondent to the greatness of his birth, entered, and informed the British minister that one

Martin, an English painter, had left a challenge for him at his house for having said Martin was no gentleman. He would by no means have spoke of the duel before the transaction of it, but that his honour, his blood, his &c. would never permit him to fight with one who was no cavalier; which was what he came to inquire of his excellency. We laughed loud laughs, but unheard; his fright or his nobility had closed his ears. But mark the sequel. The instant he was gone, my very English curiosity hurried me out of the gate St. Gallo; 'twas the place and hour appointed. We had not been driving about above ten minutes, but out popped a little figure, pale but cross, with beard unshaved and hair uncombed, a slouched hat, and a considerable red cloak, in which was wrapped, under his arm, the fatal sword that was to revenge the highly injured Mr. Martin, painter and defendant. I darted my head out of the coach, just ready to say, "Your servant, Mr. Martin," and talk about the architecture of the triumphal arch that was building there; but he would not know me, and walked off. We left him to wait for an hour, to grow very cold and very valiant the more it grew past the hour of appointment. We were figuring all the poor creature's huddle of thoughts, and confused hopes of victory or fame, of his unfinished pictures, or his situation upon bouncing into the next world. You will think us strange creatures; but 'twas a pleasant sight, as we knew the poor painter was safe. I have thought of it since, and am inclined to believe, that nothing but two English could have been capable of such a jaunt. I remember, 'twas reported in London that the plague was at a house in the city, and all the town went to see it. Adieu! Yours ever.

LETTER V.

The Hon. Horace Walpole and Mr. Gray to Richard West, Esq.

Rome, April 16, 1740, N. S.

I'LL tell you, West, because one is amongst new things, you think one can always write new things. When I first came abroad, every thing struck me, and I wrote its history; but now I am grown so used to be surprised, that I don't perceive any flutter in myself when I meet with any novelties; curiosity and astonishment wear off, and the next thing is, to fancy that other people know as much of places as one's self; or, at least, one does not remember that they do not. It appears to me as odd to write to you of St. Peter's, as it would do to you to write of Westminster Abbey. Besides, as one looks at churches, &c. with a book of travels in one's hand, and sees every thing particularized there, it would appear transcribing to write upon the same subjects. I know you will hate me for this declaration; I remember how ill I used to take it when any body served me so that was travelling. Well, I will tell you something, if you will love me: you have seen prints of the ruins of the temple of Minerva Medica; you shall only hear its situation, and then figure what a villa might be laid out there. 'Tis in the middle of a garden: at a little distance are two subterraneous grottos, which were the burial places of the liberti of Augustus. There are all the niches and covers of the urns with the inscriptions remaining; and, in one, very considerable remains of an ancient stucco ceiling with paintings in grotesque. Some of the walks would terminate upon the Castellum Aquæ Martiæ, St. John Lateran, and St. Maria Maggiore, besides other churches; the walls of the garden would be two aqueducts, and the entrance

through one of the old gates of Rome. This glorious spot is neglected, and only serves for a small vineyard and kitchen-garden.

I am very glad that I see Rome while it yet exists; before a great number of years are elapsed, I question whether it will be worth seeing. Between the ignorance and poverty of the present Romans, every thing is neglected and falling to decay; the villas are entirely out of repair, and the palaces so ill kept, that half the pictures are spoiled by damp. At the villa Ludovisi is a large oracular head of red marble, colossal, and with vast foramina for the eyes and mouth: the man that shewed the palace said it was *un ritratto della famiglia.* The cardinal Corsini has so thoroughly pushed on the misery of Rome, by impoverishing it, that there is no money but paper to be seen. He is reckoned to have amassed three millions of crowns. You may judge of the affluence the nobility live in, when I assure you, that what the chief princes allow for their own eating is a testoon a day, eighteen pence; there are some extend their expense to five pauls, or half a crown: cardinal Albani is called extravagant for laying out ten pauls for his dinner and supper. You may imagine they never have any entertainments: so far from it, they never have any company. The princesses and duchesses, particularly, lead the dismalest of lives. Being the posterity of popes, though of worse families than the ancient nobility, they expect greater respect than my ladies the countesses and marquises will pay them; consequently they consort not, but mope in a vast palace, with two miserable tapers, and two or three monsignori, whom they are forced to court and humour, that they may not be entirely deserted. Sundays they do issue forth, in a vast unwieldy coach, to the Corso.

In short, child, after sunset one passes one's time here very ill; and if I did not wish for you in the mornings, it would be no compliment to tell you that I do in the evening. Lord! how many English I could change for you, and yet buy you wondrous cheap! And then, French and Germans I could fling into the bargain by dozens. Nations swarm here. You will have a great fat French cardinal, garnished with thirty abbés, roll into the area of St. Peter's, gape, turn short, and talk of the chapel of Versailles. I heard one of them say, t'other day, he had been at the *Capitale.* One asked, of course, how he liked it—*Ah! il y a assez de belles choses.**

Tell Asheton I have received his letter, and will write next post; but I am in a violent hurry, and have no more time; so Gray finishes this delicately——

Not so delicate; nor indeed would his conscience suffer him to write to you, till he received *de vos nouvelles,* if he had not the tail of another person's letter to use, by way of evasion. I sha'n't describe, as being in the only place in the world that deserves it; which may seem an odd reason—but they say as how it's fulsome, and every body does it (and I suppose every body says the same thing); else I should tell you a vast deal about the Coliseum, and the Conclave, and the Capitol, and these matters. *A propos du Colisée,* if you don't know what it is, the prince Borghese will be very capable of giving you some account of it, who told an Englishman, that asked what it was built for—"They say 'twas for Christians to fight with tigers in." We are just come from adoring a great piece of the true cross, St. Longinus's spear, and St. Veronica's handkerchief; all which have been this evening exposed to view in St.

* Ah! there is a plenty of fine things.

Peter's. In the same place, and on the same occasion, last night, Walpole saw a poor creature, naked to the waist, discipline himself with a scourge, filled with iron prickles, till he had made himself a raw doublet, that he took for red satin torn, and showing the skin through. I should tell you, that he fainted away three times at the sight, and I twice and a half at the repetition of it. All this is performed by the light of a vast fiery cross, composed of hundreds of little crystal lamps, which appears through the great altar, under the grand tribuna, as if hanging by itself in the air. All the confraternities of the city resort thither in solemn procession, habited in linen frocks, girt with a cord, and their heads covered with a cowl all over, that has only two holes before to see through. Some of these are all black, others parti-coloured and white: and with these masqueraders that vast church is filled, who are seen thumping their breast, and kissing the pavement with extreme devotion. But methinks I am describing:—'tis an ill habit; but this, like every thing else, will wear off. We have sent you our compliments by a friend of yours, and correspondent in a corner, who seems a very agreeable man, one Mr. Williams: I am sorry he staid so little a while in Rome. I forget Porto Bello all this while; pray let us know where it is, and whether you or Asheton had any hand in the taking of it. Duty to the admiral. Adieu! Ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER VI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to R. West, Esq.

Naples, June 14, 1740, N. S.

Dear West,

ONE hates writing descriptions that are to be found in every book of travels; but we have seen something to-day that I am sure you never read of, and perhaps never heard of. Have you ever heard of the subterraneous town? a whole Roman town, with all its edifices, remaining under ground? Don't fancy the inhabitants buried it there to save it from the Goths: they were buried with it themselves; which is a caution we are not told they ever took. You remember, in Titus's time, there were several cities destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius, attended with an earthquake. Well, this was one of them, not very considerable, and then called Herculaneum. Above it has since been built Portici, about three miles from Naples, where the king has a villa. This under-ground city is, perhaps, one of the noblest curiosities that ever has been discovered. It was found out by chance, about a year and a half ago. They began digging, they found statues; they dug further, they found more. Since that they have made a very considerable progress, and find continually. You may walk the compass of a mile; but, by the misfortune of the modern town being overhead, they are obliged to proceed with great caution, lest they destroy both one and t'other. By this occasion the path is very narrow, just wide enough and high enough for one man to walk upright. They have hollowed as they found it easiest to work, and have carried their streets not exactly where were the ancient ones, but sometimes before houses, sometimes through them. You would imagine that all the fabrics were crushed together; on the contrary, except some columns, they have found all the edifices standing upright in their proper situation. There is one inside of a temple quite perfect, with the middle arch, two columns, and two pilasters. It is built of brick, plastered over and painted with architecture: almost all the insides

of the houses are in the same manner; and, what is very particular, the general ground of all the painting is red. Besides this temple, they make out very plainly an amphitheatre: the stairs, of white marble, and the seats, are very perfect; the inside was painted in the same colour with the private houses, and great part cased with white marble. They have found, among other things, some fine statues, some human bones, some rice, medals, and a few paintings, extremely fine. These latter are preferred to all the ancient paintings that have ever been discovered. We have not seen them yet, as they are kept in the king's apartment, whither all these curiosities are transplanted; and 'tis difficult to see them; but we shall. I forgot to tell you, that, in several places, the beams of the houses remain, but burnt to charcoal; so little damaged that they retain visibly the grain of the wood, but, upon touching, crumble to ashes. What is remarkable, there are no other marks or appearances of fire, but what are visible on these beams.

There might certainly be collected great light from this reservoir of antiquities, if a man of learning had the inspection of it; if he directed the working, and would make a journal of the discoveries. But I believe there is no judicious choice made of directors. There is nothing of the kind known in the world; I mean a Roman city entire of that age, and that has not been corrupted with modern repairs.* Besides scrutinizing this very carefully, I should be inclined to search for the remains of the other towns, that were partners with this in the general ruin. 'Tis certainly an advantage to the learned world, that this has been laid up so long. Most of the discoveries in Rome were made in a barbarous age, where they only ransacked the ruins in quest of treasure, and had no regard to the form and being of the building; or to any circumstances that might give light into its use and history. I shall finish this long account with a passage which Gray has observed in Statius, and which directly pictures out this latent city:—

Hæc ego Chalcidicis ad te, Marcelle, sonabam
Littoribus, fractas ubi Vestius egerit iras,
Æmula Trinacriis volvens incendia flammis.
Mira fides! credetne virûm ventura propago,
Cum segetes iterum, cum jam hæc deserta virebunt,
*Infra urbes populosque premi?**

SYLV. lib. iv. epist. 4.

Adieu, my dear West! and believe me yours ever.

* Pompeia was not then discovered.

LETTER VII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to John Chute, Esq.†

Stowe, Aug. 4, 1753.

My dear sir,

You would deserve to be scolded, if you had not lost almost as much pleasure as you have disappointed me of.‡ Whether George Montagu will be so content with your commuting punishments, I don't know: I should think not: he *cried and roared all night*§ when I delivered your excuse. He is extremely well housed, after having roamed like a Tartar about the country, with his whole personal estate at his heels. There is an extensive view, which is called pretty: but Northamptonshire is no county to please me. What entertained me was, that he, who in London was grown an absolute recluse, is over

* These things I sung to you, Marcellus, on the Chalcidian shores, where Vesuvius, in its wrath, emulates the fires of Ætna. Will the future race of men, when these forest fields shall again be green with corn, believe that cities and their inhabitants are buried beneath them?

† Of the Vine, in Hampshire.

‡ In not accompanying Mr. Walpole on a visit to Mr. George Montagu, at Greatworth.

§ A phrase of Mr. Montagu's.

head and ears in neighbours, and as popular as if he intended to stand for the county, instead of having given up the town. The very first morning after my arrival, as we were getting into the chaise to go to Wroxton, they notified a sir Harry Danvers, a young squire, booted and spurred, and buckskin-breeched.—"Will you drink any chocolate?"—"No; a little wine and water, if you please." I suspected nothing but that he had rode till he was dry. "Nicolò, get some wine and water." He desired the water might be warm—I began to stare—Montagu understood the dialect, and ordered a negus. I had great difficulty to keep my countenance, and still more when I saw the baronet finish a very large jug indeed. To be sure, he wondered as much at me, who did not finish a jug; and I could not help reflecting, that living always in the world makes one as unfit for living out of it, as always living out of it does for living in it. Knightley, the knight of the shire, has been entertaining all the parishes round with a turtle feast, which, so far from succeeding, has almost made him suspected for a *Jew*, as the country parsons have not yet learned to wade into green fat.

The roads are very bad to Greatworth, and such numbers of gates, that, if one loved punning, one should call it the *Gate-house*. The proprietor had a wonderful invention: the chimnies, which are of stone, have niches and benches in them, where the man used to sit and smoke. I had twenty disasters, according to custom; lost my way, and had my French boy almost killed by a fall with his horse: but I have been much pleased. When I was at Park Place I went to see sir H. Englefield's,* which Mr. C**** and lady M*** prefer, but I think very undeservedly, to Mr. Southcote's. It is not above a quarter as extensive, and wants the river. There is a pretty view of Reading seen under a rude arch, and the water is well disposed. The buildings are very insignificant, and the house far from good. The town of Henley has been extremely disturbed with an engagement between the ghosts of miss Blandy and her father, which continued so violent, that some bold persons, to prevent farther bloodshed, broke in, and found it was two jackasses, which had got into the kitchen.

I felt strangely tempted to stay at Oxford, and survey it at my leisure; but, as I was alone, I had not courage. I passed by sir James Dashwood's,* a vast new house, situated so high that it seems to stand for the county, as well as himself. I did look over lord Jersey's,† which was built for a hunting-box, and is still little better. But now I am going to tell you how delightful a day I passed at Wroxton. Lord Guildford has made George Montagu so absolutely viceroy over it, that we saw it more agreeable than you can conceive; roamed over the whole house, found every door open, saw not a creature, had an extreme good dinner, wine, fruit, coffee and tea, in the library, were served by fairies, tumbled over the books, said one or two talismanic words, and the cascade played, and went home loaded with pine-apples and flowers. You will take me for monsieur de Coulanges, I describe eatables so feelingly; but the manner in which we were served made the whole delicious. The house was built by a lord Downe, in the reign of James the First; and, though there is a fine hall and a vast dining-room below, and as large a drawing-room above, it is neither good nor agreeable: one end of the front was never finished, and might have a good apartment. The

* White Knights.

* At High Wycombe. † Middleton.

library is added by this lord, and is a pleasant chamber. Except loads of old portraits, there is no tolerable furniture. A whole length of the first earl of Downe is in the bath robes, and has a coif under the hat and feather. There is a charming picture of prince Henry, about twelve years old, drawing his sword to kill a stag, with a lord Harrington; a good portrait of sir Owen Hopton, 1590; your *pious* grandmother, my lady Dacre, which I think like you; some good Cornelius Johnsons; a lord North, by Riley, good; and an extreme fine portrait by him of the lord keeper: I have never seen but few of the hand, but most of them have been equal to Lely and the best of sir Godfrey. There is, too, a curious portrait of sir Thomas Pope, the founder of Trinity college, Oxford, said to be by Holbein. The chapel is new, but in a pretty Gothic taste, with a very long window of painted glass, very tolerable. The frieze is pendent, just in the manner I propose for the eating-room at Strawberry Hill. Except one scene, which is indeed noble, I cannot much commend the without doors. This scene consists of a beautiful lake, entirely shut in with wood: the head falls into a fine cascade, and that into a serpentine river, over which is a little Gothic seat, like a round temple, lifted up by a shaggy mount. On an eminence in the park is an obelisk, erected to the honour and at the expense of "*optimus et munificentissimus*," the late prince of Wales, "*in loci amœnitatem et memoriam adventûs ejus.*"* There are several paltry Chinese buildings and bridges, which have the merit or demerit of being the progenitors of a very numerous race all over the kingdom; at least they were of the very first. In the church is a beautiful tomb of an earl and countess of Downe, and the tower is in a good plain Gothic style, and was once, they tell you, still more beautiful; but Mr. Miller, who designed it, unluckily once in his life happened to think rather of beauty than of the water tables, and so it fell down the first winter.

On Wednesday morning we went to see a sweet little chapel at Steane, built in 1620, by sir T. Crewe, speaker in the time of the first James and Charles. Here are the remains of the mansion house, but quite in ruins: the chapel is kept up by my lady Arran, the last of the race. There are seven or eight monuments. On one is this epitaph, which I thought pretty enough:—

Conjux casta, parens felix, matrona pudica,
*Sara viro, mundo Martha, Maria Deo.**

On another is the most affected inscription I ever saw, written by two brothers on their sister; they say, *This agreeable mortal translated her into immortality such a day:* but I could not help laughing at one quaint expression, to which time has given a droll sense; *She was a constant lover of the best.*

I have been here these two days, extremely amused and charmed indeed. Wherever you stand, you see an Albano landscape. Half as many buildings I believe would be too many, but such a profusion gives inexpressible richness. You may imagine I have some private reflections entertaining enough, not very communicable to the company: the temple of friendship, in which, among twenty memorandums of quarrels, is the bust of Mr. Pitt: Mr. James Grenville is now in the house, whom his uncle disinherited for his attachment to that very Pylades, Mr. Pitt. He broke with Mr. Pope, who is deified in the Elysian fields, before the in-

* The best and most munificent to the beauty of the place and the memory of his arrival.

* A chaste wife, a happy parent, a modest matron—Sarah to her husband, Martha to the world, Mary to God.

scription for his head was finished. That of sir J. Barnard, which was bespoke by the name of a bust of my lord mayor, was, by a mistake of the sculptor, done for alderman Perry. The statue of the king, and that "*honori, laudi, virtuti divæ Carolinæ*,"* make one smile, when one sees the ceiling, where Britannia rejects and hides the reign of king ****. But I have no patience at building and planting a satire: Such is the temple of modern virtue in ruins! The Grecian temple is glorious: this I openly worship: in the heretical corner of my heart I adore the Gothic building, which, by some unusual inspiration, Gibbs has made pure, and beautiful, and venerable. The style has a propensity to the Venetian or mosque Gothic, and the great column near it makes the whole put one in mind of the place of St. Mark. The windows are throughout consecrated with painted glass; most of it from the priory at Warwick, a present from that foolish ****, who quarrelled with me (because his father was a gardener) for asking him if lord Brook had planted much.—A-propos to painted glass. I forgot to tell you of a sweet house, which Mr. Montagu carried me to see, belonging to a Mr. Holman, a Catholic, and called Warkworth. The situation is pretty, the front charming, composed of two round and two square towers. The court within is incomplete on one side; but above stairs is a vast gallery, with four bow windows and twelve other large ones, all filled with the arms of the old peers of England, with all their quarterings entire. You don't deserve, after deserting me, that I should tempt you to such a sight; but this alone is worth while to carry you to Greatworth.

Adieu, my dear sir! I return to Strawberry to-morrow, and forgive you enough not to deprive myself of the satisfaction of seeing you there, whenever you have nothing else to do. Yours ever.

* To the honour, praise, and virtue of the divine Catherine.

LETTER VIII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Richard Bentley, Esq.

Strawberry Hill, September 18, 1755

My dear sir,

After an expectation of six weeks, I have received a letter from you, dated August 23d. Indeed, I did not impute any neglect to you; I knew it arose from the war: but Mr. *** tells me the pacquets will now be more regular. Mr. *** tells me!—What, has he been in town, or at Strawberry?—No; but I have been at Southampton; I was at the Vine; and on the arrival of a few fine days, the first we have had this summer, after a deluge, Mr. Chute persuaded me to take a jaunt to Winchester and Netley Abbey, with the latter of which he is very justly enchanted.

I was disappointed in Winchester: it is a paltry town, and small. King Charles the Second's house is the worst thing I ever saw of sir Christopher Wren,—a mixture of a town hall and an hospital, not to mention the bad choice of the situation in such a country; it is all *ups*, that should be *downs*. I talk to you as supposing that you never have been at Winchester, though I suspect you have; for the entrance of the cathedral is the very idea of that of Mabland. I like the smugness of the cathedral, and the profusion of the most beautiful Gothic tombs. That of cardinal Beaufort is in a style more free, and of more taste, than any thing I have seen of the kind. His figure confirms me in my opinion, that I have struck out the true history of the picture that I bought of Robinson, and which I take for the marriage

of Henry VI. Besides the monuments of the Saxon kings, of Lucius, William Rufus, his brother, &c., there are those of six such great or considerable men as Beaufort, William of Wickham, him of Wainfleet, the bishops Fox and Gardiner, and my lord treasurer Portland. How much power and ambition under half a dozen stones! I own, I grow to look on tombs as lasting mansions, instead of observing them for curious pieces of architecture! Going into Southampton, I passed Bevis Mount, where my lord Peterborough

Hung his trophies o'er his garden gate;

but general Mordaunt was there, and we could not see it. We walked long by moonlight on the terrace along the beach. Guess, if we talked of and wished for you! The town is crowded: sea-baths are established there too. But how shall I describe Netley to you? I can only by telling you, that it is the spot in the world for which Mr. Chute and I wish. The ruins are vast, and retain fragments of beautiful fretted roofs, pendant in the air, with all variety of Gothic patterns of windows, wrapped round and round with ivy: many trees are sprouted up amongst the walls, and only want to be increased with cypresses! A hill rises above the abbey, encircled with wood: the fort, in which we would build a tower for habitation, remains, with two small platforms. This little castle is buried from the abbey in a wood, in the very centre, on the edge of the hill: on each side breaks in the view of the Southampton sea, deep blue, glistering with silver and vessels; on one side terminated by Southampton, on the other by Calshot castle; and the Isle of Wight rising above the opposite hills. In short, they are not the ruins of Netley, but of Paradise. Oh! the purple abbots, what a spot had they chosen to slumber in! The scene is so beautifully tranquil, yet so lively, that they seem only to have *retired into* the world.

I know nothing of the war, but that we catch little French ships like crawfish. They have taken one of ours, with governor *** going to ***. He is a very worthy young man, but so stiffened with sir ***'s old fustian, that I am persuaded he is at this minute in the citadel of Nantes, comparing himself to Regulus.

Gray has lately been here. He has begun an ode, which, if he finishes equally, will, I think, inspirit all your drawing again. It is founded on an old tradition of Edward I. putting to death the Welsh bards. Nothing but you, or Salvator Rosa, and Nicolo Poussin, can paint up to the expressive horror and dignity of it. Don't think I mean to flatter you; all I would say is, that now the two latter are dead, you must of necessity be Gray's painter. In order to keep your talent alive, I shall next week send you flake white, brushes, oil, and the enclosed directions from Mr. Müntz, who is still at the Vine, and whom, for want of you, we labour hard to form. I shall put up in the parcel two or three prints of my eagle, which, as you never would draw it, is very moderately performed; and yet the drawing was much better than the engraving. I shall send you too a trifling snuff-box, only as a sample of the new manufacture at Battersea, which is done with copper-plates. Mr. Chute is at the Vine, where I cannot say any works go on in proportion to my impatience. I have left him an *inventionary* of all I want to have done there; but I believe it may be bound up with the century of projects of that foolish marquis of Worcester, who printed a catalogue of titles of things, which he gave no directions to execute, nor I believe could. Adieu! Yours ever.

LETTER IX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Arlington Street, November 13, 1760.

EVEN the honey-moon of a new reign don't produce events every day. There is nothing but the common saying of addresses and kissing hands. The chief difficulty is settled; lord Gower yields the mastership of the horse to lord Huntingdon, and removes to the great wardrobe, from whence sir Thomas Robinson was to have gone into Ellis's place, but he is saved. The city, however, have a mind to be out of humour; a paper has been fixed on the Royal Exchange, with these words, "No petticoat government, no Scotch minister, no lord George Sackville;" two hints totally unfounded, and the other scarce true. No petticoat ever governed less; it is left at Leicester House; lord George's breeches are as little concerned; and, except lady Susan Stuart and sir Harry Erskine, nothing has yet been done for any Scots. For the king himself, he seems all good-nature, and wishing to satisfy every body; all his speeches are obliging. I saw him again yesterday, and was surprised to find the levee room had lost so entirely the air of the lion's den. This sovereign don't stand in one spot, with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of German news; he walks about, and speaks to every body. I saw him afterwards on the throne, where he is graceful and genteel, sits with dignity, and reads his answers to addresses well: it was the Cambridge address, carried by the duke of Newcastle in his doctor's gown, and looking like the *medecin malgrè lui*. He had been vehemently solicitous for attendance, for fear my lord Westmoreland, who vouchsafes himself to bring the address from Oxford, should outnumber him. Lord Litchfield and several other jacobites have kissed hands: George Selwyn says, "They go to St. James's, because now there are so many *Stuarts* there."

Do you know I had the curiosity to go to the burying t'other night. I had never seen a royal funeral; nay, I walked as a rag of quality, which I found would be, and so it was, the easiest way of seeing it. It is absolutely a noble sight. The prince's chamber, hung with purple, and a quantity of silver lamps, the coffin under a canopy of purple velvet, and six vast chandeliers of silver, on high stands, had a very good effect. The ambassador from Tripoli and his son were carried to see that chamber. The procession, through a line of foot-guards, every seventh man bearing a torch, the horse-guards lining the outside, their officers, with drawn sabres and crape sashes, on horseback, the drums muffled, the fifes, bells tolling, and minute guns; all this was very solemn. But the charm was the entrance of the abbey, where we were received by the dean and chapter in rich robes, the choir and almsmen bearing torches, the whole abbey so illuminated, that one saw it to greater advantage than by day; the tombs, long aisles, and fretted roof, all appearing distinctly, and with the happiest *chiara scuro*. There wanted nothing but incense, and little chapels, here and there, with priests saying mass for the repose of the defunct; yet one could not complain of its not being Catholic enough. I had been in dread of being coupled with some boy of ten years old; but the heralds were not very accurate, and I walked with George Grenville, taller and older, to keep me in countenance. When we came to the chapel of Henry the Seventh, all solemnity and decorum ceased; no order was observed, people sat or stood where

they could or would; the yeomen of the guard were crying out for help, oppressed by the immense weight of the coffin; the bishop read sadly, and blundered in the prayers; the fine chapter, *Man that is born of a woman*, was chaunted, not read; and the anthem, besides being immeasurably tedious, would have served as well for a nuptial. The real serious part was the figure of the duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark brown adonis, and a cloak of black cloth, with a train of five yards. Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it near two hours; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke, which has affected too one of his eyes; and placed over the mouth of the vault, into which, in all probability, he must himself so soon descend; think how unpleasant a situation! He bore it all with a firm and unaffected countenance. This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque duke of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in a stall, the archbishop hovering over him with a smelling-bottle: but in two minutes his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass, to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand, and mopping his eyes with the other. Then returned the fear of catching cold; and the duke of Cumberland, who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning round, found it was the duke of Newcastle standing upon his train, to avoid the chill of the marble. It was very theatric to look down into the vault, where the coffin lay, attended by mourners with lights. Clavering, the groom of the bed-chamber, refused to sit up with the body, and was dismissed by the king's order.

I have nothing more to tell you but a trifle, a very trifle. The king of Prussia has totally defeated marshal Daun. This, which would have been prodigious news a month ago, is nothing to-day; it only takes its turn among the questions, "Who is to be groom of the bed-chamber? What is sir T. Robinson to have?" I have been to Leicester Fields to-day; the crowd was immoderate; I don't believe it will continue so. Good night. Yours ever.

LETTER X.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Houghton, March 25, 1761.

HERE I am at Houghton! and alone! in this spot, where (except two hours last month) I have not been in sixteen years! Think, what a crowd of reflections! No; Gray, and forty church-yards, could not furnish so many; nay, I know one must feel them with greater indifference than I possess, to have patience to put them into verse. Here I am, probably for the last time of my life, though not for the last time: every clock that strikes tells me I am an hour nearer to yonder church—that church, into which I have not yet had courage to enter, where lies that mother on whom I doated, and who doated on me! There are the two rival mistresses of Houghton, neither of whom ever wished to enjoy it! There, too, lies he who founded its greatness, to contribute to whose fall Europe was embroiled; there he sleeps in quiet and dignity, while his friend and his foe, rather his false ally and real enemy, Newcastle and Bath, are exhausting the dregs of their pitiful lives in squabbles and pamphlets.

The surprise the pictures gave me is again renewed. Accustomed for

many years to see nothing but wretched daubs and varnished copies at auctions, I look at these as enchantment. My own description of them seems poor; but shall I tell you truly, the majesty of Italian ideas almost sinks before the warm nature of Flemish colouring? Alas! don't I grow old? My young imagination was fired with Guido's ideas; must they be plump and prominent as Abishag to warm me now? Does great youth feel with poetic limbs, as well as see with poetic eyes? In one respect I am very young: I cannot satiate myself with looking: an incident contributed to make me feel this more strongly. A party arrived, just as I did, to see the house, a man and three women in riding-dresses, and they rode post through the apartments. I could not hurry before them fast enough; they were not so long in seeing for the first time, as I could have been in one room, to examine what I knew by heart. I remember formerly being often diverted with this kind of *seers;* they come, ask what such a room is called, in which sir Robert lay, write it down, admire a lobster or a cabbage in a market-piece, dispute whether the last room was green or purple, and then hurry to the inn for fear the fish should be over-dressed. How different my sensations! not a picture here but recalls a history; not one, but I remember in Downing Street or Chelsea, where queens and crowds admired them, though seeing them as little as these travellers!

When I had drank tea, I strolled into the garden; they told me it was now called the *pleasure-ground.*— What a dissonant idea of pleasure! those groves, those *allées,* where I have passed so many charming moments, are now stripped up or overgrown: many fond paths I could not unravel, though with a very exact clew in my memory: I met two gamekeepers and a thousand hares! In the days when all my soul was tuned to pleasure and vivacity (and you will think, perhaps, it is far from being out of tune yet), I hated Houghton and its solitude; yet I loved this garden, as now, with many regrets, I love Houghton; Houghton, I know not what to call it, a monument of grandeur or ruin! How I have wished this evening for lord Bute! How I could preach to him! For myself, I do not want to be preached to; I have long considered how every Balbec must wait for the chance of a Mr. Wood. The servants wanted to lay me in the great apartment —what, to make me pass my night as I have done my evening! It were like proposing to Margaret Roper to be a duchess in the court that cut off her father's head, and imagining it would please her. I have chosen to sit in my father's little dressing-room, and am now by his scrutoire, where, in the height of his fortune, he used to receive the accounts of his farmers, and deceive himself, or us, with the thoughts of his economy. How wise a man at once, and how weak! For what has he built Houghton? for his grandson to annihilate, or for his son to mourn over. If lord Burleigh could rise and view his representative driving the Hatfield stage, he would feel as I feel now. Poor little Strawberry! at least it will not be stripped to pieces by a descendant! You will find all these fine meditations dictated by pride, not by philosophy. Pray consider through how many mediums philosophy must pass, before it is purified—

"—How often must it weep, how often burn."

My mind was extremely prepared for all this gloom by parting with Mr. Conway yesterday morning; moral reflections or common places are the livery one likes to wear, when one has just had a real misfortune. He is going to Germany: I was glad

to dress myself up in transitory Houghton, in lieu of very sensible concern. To-morrow I shall be distracted with thoughts, at least images, of very different complexion. I go to Lynn, and am to be elected on Friday. I shall return hither on Saturday, again alone, to expect Burleighides on Sunday, whom I left at Newmarket. I must once in my life see him on his grandfather's throne.

Epping, Monday night, thirty-first.

No, I have not seen him; he loitered on the road, and I was kept at Lynn till yesterday morning. It is plain I never knew for how many trades I was formed, when at this time of day I can begin electioneering, and succeed in my new vocation. Think of me, the subject of a mob, who was scarce ever before in a mob, addressing them in the town-hall, riding at the head of two thousand people through such a town as Lynn, dining with above two hundred of them, amid bumpers, huzzas, songs, and tobacco, and finishing with country dancing at a ball and sixpenny whisk! I have borne it all cheerfully; nay, have sat hours in *conversation*, the thing upon earth that I hate, have been to hear misses play on the harpsichord, and to see an alderman's copies of Rubens and Carlo Marat! Yet, to do the folks justice, they are sensible, and reasonable, and civilized; their very language is polished since I lived among them. I attribute this to their more frequent intercourse with the world and the capital, by the help of good roads and post-chaises, which, if they have abridged the king's dominions, have at least tamed his subjects. Well, how comfortable it will be to-morrow, to see my paroquet, to play at loo, and not be obliged to talk seriously! The Heraclitus of the beginning of this letter will be overjoyed on finishing it to sign himself your old friend, DEMOCRITUS.

P. S. I forgot to tell you, that my ancient aunt Hammond came over to Lynn to see me; not from any affection, but curiosity. The first thing she said to me, though we have not met these sixteen years, was, "Child, you have done a thing to-day, that your father never did in all his life; you sat as they carried you; he always stood the whole time." "Madam," said I, "when I am placed in a chair, I conclude I am to sit in it; besides, as I cannot imitate my father in great things, I am not at all ambitious of mimicking him in little ones." I am sure she proposes to tell her remarks to my uncle Horace's ghost, the instant they meet.

LETTER XI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Arlington Street, May 5, 1761.

WE have lost a young genius, sir William Williams; an express from Belleisle, arrived this morning, brings nothing but his death. He was shot very unnecessarily, riding too near a battery; in sum, he is a sacrifice to his own rashness and to ours. For what are we taking Belleisle? I rejoiced at the little loss we had on landing; for the glory, I leave it to the common council. I am very willing to leave London to them too, and do pass half the week at Strawberry, where my two passions, lilacs and nightingales are in full bloom. I spent Sunday as if it were Apollo's birth-day: Gray and Mason were with me, and we listened to the nightingales till one o'clock in the morning. Gray has translated two noble incantations from the Lord knows who, a Danish Gray, who lived the Lord knows when. They

are to be enchased in a history of English bards, which Mason and he are writing, but of which the former has not written a word yet, and of which the latter, if he rides Pegasus at his usual foot-pace, will finish the first page two years hence.

But the true frantic Œstus resides at present with Mr. Hogarth. I went t'other morning to see a portrait he is painting of Mr. Fox. Hogarth told me he had promised, if Mr. Fox would sit as he liked, to make as good a picture as Vandyke or Rubens could. I was silent.—"Why now," said he, "you think this very vain, but why should not one speak truth?" This *truth* was uttered in the face of his own Sigismonda, which is exactly a maudlin, tearing off the trinkets that her keeper had given her, to fling at his head. She has her father's picture in a bracelet on her arm, and her fingers are bloody with the heart, as if she had just bought a sheep's pluck in St. James's market. As I was going, Hogarth put on a very grave face, and said, "Mr. Walpole, I want to speak to you." I sat down, and said, I was ready to receive his commands. For shortness, I will mark this wonderful dialogue by initial letters.

H. I am told you are going to entertain the town with something in our way. W. Not very soon, Mr. Hogarth. H. I wish you would let me have it, to correct; I should be very sorry to have you expose yourself to censure; we painters must know more of those things than other people. W. Do you think nobody understands painting but painters? H. Oh! so far from it, there's Reynolds, who certainly has genius; why, but t'other day he offered a hundred pounds for a picture that I would not hang in my cellar; and, indeed, to say truth, I have generally found, that persons who had studied painting least were the best judges of it. But what I particularly wished to say to you was about sir James Thornhill (you know he married sir James's daughter): I would not have you say any thing against him: there was a book published some time ago, abusing him, and it gave great offence. He was the first that attempted history in England, and, I assure you, some Germans have said that he was a very great painter. W. My work will go no lower than the year one thousand seven hundred, and I really have not considered whether sir James Thornhill will come within my plan or not; if he does, I fear you and I shall not agree upon his merits. H. I wish you would let me correct it; besides, I am writing something of the same kind myself; I should be sorry we should clash. W. I believe it is not much known what my work is: very few persons have seen it. H. Why, it is a critical history of painting, is not it? W. No; it is an antiquarian history of it in England; I bought Mr. Vertue's MSS. and, I believe, the work will not give much offence; besides, if it does, I cannot help it: when I publish any thing, I give it to the world to think of it as they please. H. Oh! if it is an antiquarian work, we shall not clash; mine is a critical work; I don't know whether I shall ever publish it. It is rather an apology for painters. I think it is owing to the good sense of the English, that they have not painted better. W. My dear Mr. Hogarth, I must take my leave of you; you now grow too wild—and I left him. If I had staid, there remained nothing but for him to bite me. I give you my honour this conversation is literal; and, perhaps, as long as you have known Englishmen and painters, you never met with any thing so distracted. I had consecrated a line to his genius (I mean, for wit) in my preface; I shall not erase it; but I hope nobody will ask

me if he is not mad. Adieu! yours ever.

LETTER XII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Arlington Street, April 6, 1763.

You will pity my distress, when I tell you that lord Waldegrave has got the small pox, and a bad sort. This day se'nnight, in the evening, I met him at Arthur's: he complained to me of the head-ache, and a sickness in the stomach. I said, "My dear lord, why don't you go home, and take James's powder: you will be well in the morning." He thanked me, said he was glad I had put him in mind of it, and he would take my advice. I sent in the morning; my niece said he had taken the powder, and that James thought he had no fever, but that she found him very low. As he had no fever, I had no apprehension. At eight o'clock on Friday night, I was told abruptly at Arthur's, that Waldegrave had the small-pox. I was excessively shocked, not knowing if the powder was good or bad for it. I went instantly to the house; at the door I was met by a servant of lady Ailesbury, sent to tell me that Mr. Conway was arrived. These two opposite strokes of terror and joy overcame me so much, that, when I got to Mr. Conway's, I could not speak to him, but burst into a flood of tears. The next morning lord Waldegrave, hearing I was there, desired to speak to me alone. I should tell you, that the moment he knew it was the small-pox, he signed his will. This has been the unvaried tenor of his behaviour; doing just what is wise and necessary, and nothing more. He told me he knew how great the chance was against his living through that distemper at his age; that, to be sure, he should like to have lived a few years longer, but if he did not, he should submit patiently; that all he desired was, that if he should fail, we would do our utmost to comfort his wife, who, he feared, was breeding, and who, he added, was the best woman in the world. I told him he could not doubt our attention to her, but that at present all our attention was fixed on him; that the great difference between having the small-pox young, or more advanced in years, consisted in the fear of the latter; but that, as I had so often heard him say, and now saw, that he had none of those fears, the danger of age was considerably lessened. Dr. Wilmot says, that if any thing saves him, it will be his tranquillity. To my comfort, I am told, that James's powder has probably been a material ingredient towards his recovery. In the mean time the universal anxiety about him is incredible. Dr. Barnard, the master of Eton, who is in town for the holidays, says, that, from his situation, he is naturally invited to houses of all ranks and parties, and that the concern is general in all. I cannot say so much of my lord, and not do a little justice to my niece too. Her tenderness, fondness, attention, and courage are surprising. She has no fears to become her, nor heroism for parade. I could not help saying to her, "There never was a nurse of your age had such attention." She replied, "There never was a nurse of my age had such an object." It is this astonishes one, to see so much beauty sincerely devoted to a man so unlovely in his person; but if Adonis was sick, she could not stir seldomer out of his bed-chamber. The physicians seem to have little hopes; but, as their arguments are not near so strong as their alarms, I own I do not give it up, and yet I look on it in a very dangerous light.

I know nothing of news and the

world; for I go to Albemarle Street early in the morning, and don't come home till late at night. Young Mr. Pitt has been dying of a fever in Bedfordshire. The bishop of Carlisle, whom I have appointed visitor of Strawberry, is gone down to him. You will be much disappointed if you expect to find the gallery near finished. They threaten me with three months before the gilding can be begun. Twenty points are at a stand by my present confinement, and I have a melancholy prospect of being forced to carry my niece thither the next time I go. The duc de Nivernois, in return for a set of the Strawberry editions, has sent me four seasons, which I conclude he thought good; but they shall pass their whole round in London, for they have not even the merit of being badly old enough for Strawberry. Mr. Bentley's epistle to lord Melcomb has been published in a magazine. It has less wit by far than I expected from him, and to the full as bad English. The thoughts are old Strawberry phrases; so are *not* the panegyrics. Here are six lines written extempore by lady Temple, on lady Mary Coke, easy and genteel, and almost true:—

> She sometimes laughs, but never loud:
> She's handsome too, but somewhat proud:
> At court she bears away the belle;
> She dresses fine, and figures well;
> With decency she's gay and airy;
> Who can this be but lady Mary?

There have been tough doings in parliament about the tax on cider: and in the western counties the discontent is so great, that if Mr. Wilkes will turn patriot hero, or patriot incendiary, in earnest, and put himself at their head, he may obtain a rope of martyrdom before the summer is over. Adieu! I tell you my sorrows, because, if I escape them, I am sure nobody will rejoice more. Yours ever.

LETTER XIII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Arlington Street, Friday night, late.

Amidst all my own grief, and all the distress which I have this moment left, I cannot forget you, who have so long been my steady and invariable friend. I cannot leave it to newspapers and correspondents to tell you my loss. Lord Waldegrave died to-day. Last night he had some glimmerings of hope. The most desponding of the faculty flattered us a little. He himself joked with the physicians, and expressed himself in this engaging manner, asking what day of the week it was; they told him Thursday. "Sure," said he, "it is Friday." "No, my lord, indeed it is Thursday." "Well," said he, "see what a rogue this distemper makes one; I want to steal nothing but a day." By the help of opiates, with which, for two or three days, they had numbed his sufferings, he rested well. This morning he had no worse symptoms. I told lady Waldegrave, that, as no material alteration was expected before Sunday, I would go to dine at Strawberry, and return in time to meet the physicians in the evening; in truth, I was worn out with anxiety and attendance, and wanted an hour or two of fresh air. I left her at twelve, and had ordered dinner at three, that I might be back early. I had not risen from table, when I received an express from lady Betty Waldegrave, to tell me that a sudden change had happened; that they had given him James's powder, but that they feared it was too late; and that he probably would be dead before I could come to my niece, for whose sake she begged I would return immediately. It was, indeed, too late! too late for every thing—late as it was given, the powder vomit-

ed him, even in the agonies. Had I had power to direct, he should never have quitted James. But these are vain regrets! vain to recollect how particularly kind he, who was kind to every body, was to me! I found lady Waldegrave at my brother's; she weeps without ceasing, and talks of his virtues and goodness to her in a manner that distracts one. My brother bears this mortification with more courage than I could have expected from his warm passions: but nothing struck me more than to see my rough savage Swiss, Louis, in tears, as he opened my chaise. I have a bitter scene to come; to-morrow morning I carry poor lady Waldegrave to Strawberry. Her fall is great, from that adoration and attention that he paid her, from that splendour of fortune, so much of which dies with him, and from that consideration, which rebounded to her from the great deference which the world had for his character. Visions, perhaps. Yet who could expect that they would have passed away, even before that fleeting thing, her beauty!

If I had time, or command enough of my thoughts, I could give you as long a detail of as unexpected a revolution in the political world. To-day has been as fatal to a whole nation, I mean to the Scotch, as to our family. Lord Bute resigned this morning. His intention was not even suspected till Wednesday, nor at all known a very few days before. In short, there is nothing, more or less, than a panic; a fortnight's opposition has demolished that scandalous, but vast majority, which a fortnight had purchased, and in five months a plan of absolute power has been demolished by a panic. He pleads to the world bad health; to his friends, more truly, that the nation was set at him. He pretends to intend retiring absolutely, and giving no umbrage. In the mean time he is packing up a sort of ministerial legacy, which cannot hold even till next session, and I should think would scarce take place at all. George Grenville is to be at the head of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, Charles Townshend to succeed him, and lord Shelburn Charles, Sir Francis Dashwood to have his barony of Despencer and the great wardrobe, in the room of lord Gower, who takes the privy seal, if the duke of Bedford takes the presidentship; but there are many *ifs* in this arrangement; the principal *if* is, if they dare stand a tempest, which has so terrified the pilot. You ask what becomes of Mr. Fox? Not at all pleased with this sudden determination, which has blown up so many of his projects, and left him time to heat no more furnaces, he goes to France by the way of the House of Lords, but keeps his place and his tools till something else happens. The confusion I suppose will be enormous, and the next act of the drama a quarrel among the opposition, who would be all-powerful, if they could do what they cannot, —hold together, and not quarrel for the plunder. As I shall be at a distance for some days, I shall be able to send you no more particulars of this interlude; but you will like a pun my brother made when he was told of this explosion: "Then," said he, "they must turn the *Jacks* out of the drawing-room again, and again take them into the kitchen." Adieu! What a world to set one's heart on! Yours ever.

LETTER XIV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Strawberry Hill, April 14, 1763.

I HAVE received your two letters together, and foresaw that your friendly good heart would feel for us just as you do. The loss is irrepa-

rable, and my poor niece is sensible it is. She has such a veneration for her lord's memory, that if her sister and I make her cheerful for a moment, she accuses herself of it the next day to the bishop of Exeter,* as if he was her confessor, and that she had committed a crime. She cried for two days to such a degree, that if she had been a fountain it must have stopped. Till yesterday she scarce eat enough to keep her alive, and looks accordingly; but at her age she must be comforted: her esteem will last, but her spirits will return in spite of herself. Her lord has made her sole executrix, and added what little *douceurs* he could to her jointure, which is but a thousand pounds a-year, the estate being but three-and-twenty hundred. The little girls will have about eight thousand pounds a-piece; for the teller's place was so great during the war, that, notwithstanding his temper was a sluice of generosity, he had saved thirty thousand pounds since his marriage.

Her sisters have been here with us the whole time. Lady Huntingtower is all mildness and tenderness; and by dint of attention I have not displeased the other. Lord Huntingtower has been here once; the bishop most of the time: he is very reasonable and good natured, and has been of great assistance and comfort to me in this melancholy office, which is to last here till Monday or Tuesday. We have got the eldest little girl too, lady Laura, who is just old enough to be amusing; and last night my nephew arrived here from Portugal. It was a terrible meeting at first, but, as he is very soldierly and lively, he got into spirits, and diverted us much with his relations of the war and the country. He confirms all we have heard of the villany, poltronery, and ignorance of the Portuguese, and of their aversion to the English; but I could perceive, even through his relation, that our flippancies and contempt of them must have given a good deal of play to their antipathy.

You are admirably kind, as you always are, in inviting me to Greatworth, and proposing Bath; but, besides its being impossible for me to take any journey just at present, I am really very well in health, and the tranquillity and air of Strawberry have done much good. The hurry of London, where I shall be glad to be just now, will dissipate the gloom that this unhappy loss has occasioned; though a deep loss I shall always think it. The time passes tolerably here; I have my painters and gilders, and constant packets of news from town, besides a thousand letters of condolence to answer; for both my niece and I have received innumerable testimonies of the regard that was felt for lord Waldegrave. I have heard of but one man, who ought to have known his worth, that has shown no concern; but I suppose his childish mind is too much occupied with the loss of his last governor! I have given up my own room to my niece, and have betaken myself to the Holbein chamber, where I am retired from the rest of the family, when I choose it, and nearer to overlook my workmen. The chapel is quite finished, except the carpet. The sable mass of the altar gives it a very sober air; for, notwithstanding the solemnity of the painted windows, it had a gaudiness that was a little profane.

I can know no news here but by rebound; and yet, though they are to rebound again to you, they will be as fresh as any you can have at Greatworth. A kind of administration is botched up for the present, and even gave itself an air of that fierceness, with which the winter set out. Lord Hardwicke was

* The bishop of Exeter was married to a sister of lady Waldegrave.

told, that his sons must vote with the court, or be turned out; he replied, as he meant to have them in place, he chose they should be removed now. It looks ill for the court when he is sturdy. They wished too to have had Pitt, if they could have had him without consequences; but they don't find any recruits repair to their standard. They brag that they should have had lord Waldegrave; a most notorious falsehood, as he had refused every offer they could invent the day before he was taken ill. The duke of Cumberland orders his servants to say, that, so far from joining them, he believes, if lord Waldegrave could have been foretold of his death, he would have preferred it to an union with Bute and Fox. The former's was a decisive panic; so sudden, that it is said lord Egremont was sent to break his resolution of retiring to the king. The other, whose journey to France does not indicate much less apprehension, affects to walk in the streets at the most public hours, to mark his not trembling. In the mean time the two chiefs have paid their bravos magnificently: no less than fifty-two thousand pounds a-year are granted in reversion! *Young* Martin, who is older than I am, is named my successor; but I intend he shall wait some years: if they had a mind to serve me, they could not have selected a fitter tool to set my character in a fair light by the comparison. Lord Bute's son has the reversion of an auditor of the imprest; this is all he has done ostensibly for his family, but the great things bestowed on the most insignificant objects, make me suspect some private compacts. Yet I may wrong him, but I do not mean it. Lord Granby has refused Ireland, and the Northumberlands are to transport their magnificence thither. I lament that you made so little of that voyage; but is this the season of unrewarded merit? One should blush to be preferred within the same year. Do but think that Calcraft is to be an Irish lord! Fox's millions, or Calcraft's tithes of millions, cannot purchase a grain of your virtue or character. Adieu! Yours most truly.

LETTER XV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Arlington Street, April 22, 1763.

I HAVE two letters from you, and shall take care to execute the commission in the second. The first diverted me much.

I brought my poor niece from Strawberry on Monday. As executrix, her presence was quite necessary, and she has never refused to do any thing reasonable that has been desired of her. But the house and the business have shocked her terribly; she still eats nothing, sleeps worse than she did, and looks dreadfully; I begin to think she will miscarry. She said to me t'other day, "They tell me, that if my lord had lived, he might have done great service to his country at this juncture, by the respect all parties had for him. This is very fine; but as he did not live to do those services, it will never be mentioned in history!" I thought this solicitude for his honour charming. But he will be known by history; he has left a small volume of memoirs, that are a *chef-d'œuvre*. He twice shewed them to me, but I kept his secret faithfully; *now* it is for his glory to divulge it.

I am glad you are going to Dr. Lewis. After an Irish voyage, I do not wonder you want careening. I have often preached to you—nay, and lived to you too; but my sermons were flung away and my example.

This ridiculous administration is patched up for the present; the de-

tail is delightful, but that I shall reserve for Strawberry-tide. Lord Bath has complained to Fanshaw of lord Pulteney's* extravagance, and added, "If he had lived, he would have spent my whole estate." This almost comes up to sir Robert Brown, who, when his eldest daughter was given over, but still alive, on that uncertainty sent for an undertaker, and bargained for her funeral, in hopes of having it cheaper, as it was possible she might recover. Lord Bath has purchased the Hatton vault in Westminster Abbey, squeezed his wife, son, and daughter into it, reserved room for himself, and has set the rest to sale. Come; all this is not far short of sir Robert Brown.

To my great satisfaction, the new lord Holland has not taken the least friendly, or even formal notice of me, on lord Waldegrave's death. It dispenses me from the least farther connexion with him, and saves explanations, which always entertain the world more than satisfy.

Dr. Cumberland is an Irish bishop. I hope before the summer is over, that some beam from your cousin's portion of the triumvirate may light on poor Bentley. If he wishes it till next winter, he will be forced to try still new sunshine. I have taken Mrs. Pritchard's house for lady Waldegrave: I offered her to live with me at Strawberry; but, with her usual good sense, she declined it, as she thought the children would be troublesome.

Charles Townshend's episode in this revolution passes belief, though he does not tell it himself. If I had a son born, and an old fairy were to appear and offer to endow him with her choicest gifts, I should cry out, "Powerful Goody, give him any thing but parts!" Adieu! Yours ever.

* Son of the earl of Bath.

LETTER XVI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Strawberry Hill, May 1, 1763.

I FEEL happy at hearing your happiness; but, my dear Harry, your vision is much indebted to your long absence, which

Makes bleak rocks and barren mountains smile.

I mean no offence to Park Place; but the bitterness of the weather makes me wonder how you can find the country tolerable now. This is a May-day for the latitude of Siberia! The milkmaids should be wrapped *in the motherly comforts of a swan-skin petticoat.* In short, such hard words have passed between me and the north wind to-day, that, according to the language of the times, I was very near abusing it for coming from Scotland, and to imputing it to lord Bute. I don't know whether I should not have written a North Briton against it, if the printers were not all sent to Newgate, and Mr. Wilkes to the Tower—ay, to the Tower, *tout de bon.* The new ministry are trying to make up for their ridiculous insignificance by a *coup d'eclat.* As I came hither yesterday, I do not know whether the particulars I have heard are genuine; but in the Tower he certainly is, taken up by lord Halifax's warrant for treason: vide the North Briton of Saturday was se'nnight. It is said he refused to obey the warrant, of which he asked and got a copy from the two messengers, telling them he did not mean to make his escape, but sending to demand his *habeas corpus*, which was refused. He then went to lord Halifax, and thence to the Tower; declaring they should get nothing out of him but what they knew. All his papers have been seized. Lord chief justice Pratt, I

am told, finds great fault with the wording of the warrant.

I don't know how to execute your commission for books of architecture, nor care to put you to expense, which I know will not answer. I have been consulting my neighbour, young Mr. Thomas Pitt, my present architect: we have all books of that sort here, but cannot think of one which will help you to a cottage or a green-house. For the former, you should send me your idea, your dimensions; for the latter, don't you rebuild your old one, though in another place? A pretty green-house I never saw; nor, without immoderate expense, can it well be an agreeable object. Mr. Pitt thinks a mere portico without a pediment, and windows removable in summer, would be the best plan you could have. If so, don't you remember something of that kind, which you liked, at sir Charles Cotterel's at Rousham? But a fine green-house must be on a more exalted plan. In short, you must be more particular, before I can be at all so.

I called at Hammersmith yesterday about lady Ailesbury's tubs; one of them is nearly finished, but they will not both be completed these ten days. Shall they be sent to you by water? Good night to her ladyship and you, and the infanta, whose progress in waxen statuary I hope advances so fast, that by next winter she may rival Rackstrow's old man. Do you know, that, though apprized of what I was going to see, it deceived me, and made such impression on my mind, that, thinking on it as I came home in my chariot, and seeing a woman steadfastly at work in a window in Pall Mall, it made me start to see her move. Adieu! Yours ever.

Arlington Street, Monday night.

The mighty commitment set out with a blunder; the warrant directed the printer and all concerned (unnamed) to be taken up. Consequently Wilkes had his *habeas corpus* of course, and was committed again; moved for another in the common pleas, and is to appear there to-morrow morning. Lord Temple being, by another strain of power, refused admittance to him, said, "I thought this was the Tower, but find it is the Bastille." They found among Wilkes's papers an unpublished North Briton, designed for last Saturday. It contained advice to the king not to go to St. Paul's on the thanksgiving, but to have a snug one in his own chapel; and to let lord George Sackville carry the sword. There was a dialogue in it, too, between Fox and Calcraft; the former says to the latter, "I did not think you would have served me so, Jemmy Twitcher."

LETTER XVII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Arlington Street, May 6, very late, 1763.

The complexion of the times is a little altered since the beginning of this last winter. Prerogative, that gave itself such airs in November, and would speak to nothing but a Tory, has had a rap this morning, that will do it some good, unless it is weak enough to do itself more harm. The judges of the common pleas have unanimously dismissed Wilkes from his imprisonment, as a breach of privilege; his offence not being a breach of the peace, only tending to it. The people are in transports; and it will require all the vanity and confidence of those able ministers, lord S*** and Mr. C***, to keep up the spirits of the court.

I must change this tone, to tell you of the most dismal calamity that ever

happened. Lady Molesworth's house, in Upper Brook Street, was burned to the ground between four and five this morning. She herself, two of her daughters, her brother, and six servants, perished. Two other of the young ladies jumped out of the two pair of stairs and garret windows: one broke her thigh, the other (the eldest of all) broke hers too, and has had it cut off. The fifth daughter is much burnt. The French governess leaped from the garret, and was dashed to pieces. Dr. Molesworth and his wife, who were there on a visit, escaped; the wife by jumping from the two pair of stairs, and saving herself by a rail; he by hanging by his hands till a second ladder was brought, after a first had proved too short. Nobody knows how or where the fire began; the catastrophe is shocking beyond what one ever heard: and poor lady Molesworth, whose character and conduct were the most amiable in the world, is universally lamented. Your good hearts will feel this in the most lively manner.

I go early to Strawberry to-morrow, giving up the new opera, madame de Boufflers, and Mr. Wilkes, and all the present topics. Wilkes, whose case has taken its place by the side of the seven bishops, calls himself the eighth—not quite improperly, when one remembers that sir Jonathan Trelawney, who swore like a trooper, was one of those confessors.

There is a good letter in the Gazetteer on the other side, pretending to be written by lord Temple, and advising Wilkes to cut his throat, like lord E***, as it would be of infinite service to their cause. There are published, too, three volumes of lady Mary Wortley's letters, which I believe are genuine, and are not unentertaining. But have you read Tom Hervey's letter to the late king? That beats every thing for madness, horrid indecency, and folly, and yet has some charming and striking passages.

I have advised Mrs. H*** to inform against Jack, as writing in the North Briton; he will then be shut up in the Tower, and may be shewn for old Nero.* Adieu! Yours ever.

LETTER XVIII

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Stamford, Saturday night, July 23, 1763.

"THUS far our arms have with success been crowned," bating a few mishaps, which will attend long marches like ours. We have conquered as many towns as Louis Quatorze in the campaign of seventy-two; that is, seen them, for he did little more, and into the bargain he had much better roads, and a drier summer. It has rained perpetually till to-day, and made us experience the rich soil of Northamptonshire, which is a clay-pudding, stuck full of villages. After we parted with you on Thursday, we saw Castle Ashby† and Easton Mauduit.‡ The first is most magnificently triste, and has all the formality of the Comptons. I should admire it, if I could see out of it, or any thing in it; but there is scarce any furniture, and the bad little frames of glass exclude all objects. Easton is miserable enough; there are many modern portraits, and one I was glad to see of the duchess of Shrewsbury. We lay at Wellingborough—pray never lie there—the beastliest inn upon earth is there! We were carried into a vast bed-chamber, which I suppose is the clubroom, for it stunk of tobacco like a justice of peace. I desired some boiling water for tea; they brought

* An old lion there, so called.
† A seat of the earl of Northampton.
‡ A seat of the earl of Sussex.

me a sugar dish of hot water in a pewter plate. Yesterday morning we went to Boughton, where we were scarce landed, before the Cardigans, in a coach and three chaises, arrived with a cold dinner in their pockets, on their way to Deane; for, as it is in dispute, they never reside at Boughton. This was most unlucky, that we should pitch on the only hour in the year in which they are there. I was so disconcerted, and so afraid of falling foul of the countess and her caprices, that I hurried from chamber to chamber, and scarce knew what I saw, but that the house is in the grand old French style, that gods and goddesses lived over my head in every room, and that there was nothing but pedigrees all around me and under my feet,—for there is literally a coat of arms at the end of every step of the stairs: did the duke mean to pun, and intend this for the *descent* of the Montagus? Well, we hurried away, and got to Drayton an hour before dinner. Oh! the dear old place! you would be transported with it. In the first place, it stands in as ugly a hole as Boughton: well! that is not its beauty. The front is a brave strong castle wall, embattled and loop-holed for defence. Passing the great gate, you come to a sumptuous, but narrow modern court, behind which rises the old mansion, all towers and turrets. The house is excellent; has a vast hall, ditto dining room, king's chamber, trunk gallery at the top of the house, handsome chapel, and seven or eight distinct apartments, besides closets and conveniences without end. Then it is covered with portraits, crammed with old china, furnished richly, and not a rag in it under forty, fifty, or a thousand years old; but not a bed or chair that has lost a tooth, or got a grey hair, so well are they preserved. I rummaged it from head to foot, examined every spangled bed, and enamelled pair of bellows, for such there are: in short, I do not believe the old mansion was ever better pleased with an inhabitant since the days of Walter de Drayton, except when it has received its divine old mistress. If one could honour her more than one did before, it would be to see with what religion she keeps up the old dwelling and customs, as well as old servants, who, you may imagine, do not love her less than other people do. The garden is just as sir John Germain brought it from Holland; pyramidal yews, treillages, and square cradle walks, with windows clipped in them. Nobody was there but Mr. Beauclerc, and lady Catherine, and two parsons: the two first suffered us to ransack and do as we would, and the two last assisted us, informed us, and carried us to every tomb in the neighbourhood. I have got every circumstance by heart, and was pleased beyond my expectation, both with the place and the comfortable way of seeing it. We staid here till after dinner to-day, and saw Fotheringhay in our way hither. The castle is totally ruined. The mount, on which the keep stood, two door cases, and a piece of the moat, are all the remains. Near it is a front and two projections of an ancient house, which, by the arms about it, I suppose was part of the palace of Richard and Cicely, duke and duchess of York. There are two pretty tombs for them and their uncle duke of York in the church, erected by order of queen Elizabeth. The church has been very fine, but is now intolerably shabby: yet many large saints remain in the windows, two entire, and all the heads well painted. You may imagine we were civil enough to the queen of Scots, to feel a feel of pity for her, while we stood on the very spot where she was put to death: my companion, I believe, who is a better royalist than I am, felt a little more. There, I have obeyed you. To-morrow we see

Burleigh and Peterborough, and lie at Ely; on Monday I hope to be in town, and on Tuesday I hope much more to be in the gallery at Strawberry Hill, and to find the gilders laying on the last leaf of gold. Good night! Yours ever.

LETTER XIX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Hockerill, Monday night, July 25, Vol. 2d.

I CONTINUE. You must know we were drowned on Saturday night. It rained, as it did at Greatworth on Wednesday, all night and all next morning; so we could not look even at the outside of Burleigh, but we saw the inside pleasantly; for lord Exeter, whom I had prepared for our intentions, came to us, and made every door and every lock fly open, even of his magazines, yet unranged. He is going through the house by degrees, furnishing a room every year, and has already made several most sumptuous. One is a little tired of Carlo Maratti and Lucca Jordano, yet still these are treasures. The china and japan are of the finest; miniatures in plenty, and a shrine full of crystal vases, filigree, enamel, jewels, and the trinkets of taste, that have belonged to many a noble dame. In return for his civilities, I made my lord Exeter a present of a glorious cabinet, whose drawers and sides are all painted by Rubens. This present, you must know, is his own, but he knew nothing of the hand or the value. Just so I have given lady Betty Germain a very fine portrait, that I discovered at Drayton in the woodhouse.

I was not much pleased with Peterborough; the front is adorable, but the inside has no more beauty than consists in vastness. By the way, I have a pen and ink that will not form a letter. We were now sent to Huntingdon in our way to Ely, as we found it impracticable, from the rains and floods, to cross the country thither. We landed in the heart of the assizes, and almost in the middle of the races, both which, to the astonishment of the virtuosi, we eagerly quitted this morning. We were hence sent south to Cambridge, still on our way northward to Ely; but when we got to Cambridge we were forced to abandon all thoughts of Ely, there being nothing but lamentable stories of inundations and escapes. However, I made myself amends with the University, which I have not seen these four-and-twenty years, and which revived many youthful scenes, which, merely from their being youthful, are forty times pleasanter than any other ideas. You know I always long to live at Oxford: I felt that I could like to live even at Cambridge again. The colleges are much cleaned and improved since my days, and the trees and groves more venerable; but the town is tumbling about their ears. We surprised Gray with our appearance, dined and drank tea with him, and are come hither, within sight of land. I always find it worth my while to make journies, for the joy I have in getting home again. A second adieu!

LETTER XX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday night, eight o'clock, April 21, 1764.

I WRITE to you with a very bad headach; I have passed a night, for which *** and the duke of *** shall pass many an uneasy one. Notwithstanding I heard from every body I met, that your regiment, as well as bedchamber, were taken

away, I would not believe it, till last night the duchess of Grafton told me, that the night before the duchess of ***** said to her, "Are not you very sorry for poor Mr. Conway? He has lost every thing."* When the witch of Endor pities, one knows she has raised the devil.

I am come hither alone, to put my thoughts into some order, and to avoid shewing the first sallies of my resentment, which I know you would disapprove; nor does it become your friend to rail. My anger shall be a little more manly, and the plan of my revenge a little deeper laid than in peevish *bons-mots*. You shall judge of my indignation by its duration.

In the mean time, let me beg you, in the most earnest and most sincere of all professions, to suffer me to make your loss as light as it is in my power to make it: I have six thousand pounds in the funds: accept all, or what part you want. Do not imagine I will be put off with a refusal. The retrenchment of my expenses, which I shall from this hour commence, will convince you that I mean to replace your fortune as far as I can. When I thought you did not want it, I had made another disposition. You have ever been the dearest person to me in the world. You have shewn that you deserve to be so. You suffer for your spotless integrity. Can I hesitate a moment to shew, that there is at least one man who knows how to value you? The new will, which I am going to make, will be a testimonial of my own sense of virtue.

One circumstance has heightened my resentment. If it was not an accident, it deserves to heighten it. The very day on which your dismission was notified, I received an order from the Treasury for the payment of what money was due to me there. Is it possible that they could mean to make any distinction between us? Have I separated myself from you? Is there that spot on earth, where I can be suspected of having paid court? Have I even left my name at a minister's door since you took your part? If they have dared to hint this, the pen that is now writing to you will bitterly undeceive them.

I am impatient to see the letters you have received, and the answers you have sent. Do you come to town? If you do not, I will come to you to-morrow se'nnight, that is, the 29th. I give no advice on any thing, because you are cooler than I am—not so cool, I hope, as to be insensible to this outrage, this villany, this injustice! You owe it to your country to labour the extermination of such ministers!

I am so bad a hypocrite, that I am afraid of shewing how deeply I feel this. Yet last night I received the account from the duchess of Grafton with more temper than you believe me capable of: but the agitation of the night disordered me so much, that lord John Cavendish, who was with me two hours this morning, does not, I believe, take me for a hero. As there are some, who I know would enjoy my mortification, and who probably designed I should feel my share of it, I wish to command myself—but that struggle shall be added to their bill. I saw nobody else before I came away but Legge, who sent for me, and wrote the enclosed for you. He would have said more, both to you and lady Ailesbury, but I would not let him, as he is so ill: however, he thinks himself that he shall live. I hope he will. I would not lose a shadow that can haunt these ministers.

I feel for lady Ailesbury, because I know she feels just as I do—and it is not a pleasant sensation. I will say no more, though I could write

* Mr. Conway had been dismissed from all his appointments, for having voted against the legality of general warrants, in the case of Wilkes.

volumes. Adieu! Yours, as I ever have been, and ever will be.

LETTER XXI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Arlington Street, April 24, 1764.

I REJOICE that you feel your loss* so little: that you act with dignity and propriety does not surprise me. To have you behave in character, and with character, is my first of all wishes; for then it will not be in the power of man to make you unhappy. Ask yourself—Is there a man in England, with whom you would change character? Is there a man in England, who would not change with you? Then think how little they have taken away.

For me, I shall certainly conduct myself as you prescribe. *Your* friend shall say and do nothing unworthy of *your* friend. You govern me in every thing but one; I mean the disposition I have told you I shall make. Nothing can alter that, but a great change in your fortune. In another point you partly misunderstood me. That I shall explain hereafter.

I shall certainly meet you here on Sunday, and very cheerfully. We may laugh at a world, in which nothing of us will remain long but our characters. Adieu! the dear family! Yours eternally.

LETTER XXII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 13, 1764.

LORD John Cavendish has been so kind as to send me word of the duke of Devonshire's legacy to you. You cannot doubt of the great joy this gives me; and yet it serves to aggravate the loss of so worthy a man! And when I feel it thus, I am sensible how much more it will add to your concern, instead of diminishing it. Yet do not wholly reflect on your misfortune. You might despise the acquisition of five thousand pounds simply; but when that sum is a public testimonial to your virtue, and bequeathed by a man so virtuous, it is a million. Measure it with the riches of those who have basely injured you, and it is still more! Why, it is glory; it is conscious innocence; it is satisfaction; it is affluence without guilt—Oh! the comfortable sound! It is a good name in the history of these corrupt days. There it will exist, when the wealth of your and their country's enemies will be wasted, or will be an indelible blemish on their descendants.

My heart is full, and yet I will say no more. My best loves to all your opulent family. Who says virtue is not rewarded in this world? It is rewarded by virtue, and it is persecuted by the bad. Can greater honour be paid to it? Yours ever.

* Of his employments.

LETTER XXIII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Rev. Mr. Cole.

Strawberry Hill, March 9, 1765.

Dear sir,

I HAD time to write but a short note with the Castle of Otranto, as your messenger called on me at four o'clock, as I was going to dine abroad. Your partiality to me and Strawberry have, I hope, inclined you to excuse the wildness of the story. You will even have found some traits to put you in mind of this place. When you read of the picture quitting its panel, did not you recollect the portrait of lord Falkland, all in white, in my gallery? Shall I even confess to you what was the origin

of this romance? I waked one morning, in the beginning of last June, from a dream, of which all I could recover was, that I had thought myself in an ancient castle (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story), and that on the uppermost banister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down, and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate. The work grew on my hands, and I grew fond of it—add, that I was very glad to think of any thing rather than politics. In short, I was so engrossed with my tale, which I completed in less than two months, that one evening I wrote from the time I had drunk my tea, about six o'clock, till half an hour after one in the morning, when my hand and fingers were so weary, that I could not hold the pen to finish the sentence, but left Matilda and Isabella talking, in the middle of a paragraph. You will laugh at my earnestness; but if I have amused you, by retracing with any fidelity the manners of ancient days, I am content, and give you leave to think me as idle as you please.

You are, as you have long been to me, exceedingly kind, and I should, with great satisfaction, embrace your offer of visiting the solitude of Blechely, though my cold is in a manner gone, and my cough quite, if I was at liberty: but as I am preparing for my fresh journey, and have forty businesses upon my hands, I can only now and then purloin a day, or half a day, to come hither. You know I am not cordially disposed to *your* French journey, which is much more serious, as it is to be much more lasting. However, though I may suffer by your absence, I would not dissuade what may suit your inclination and circumstances. One thing, however, has struck me, which I must mention, though it would depend on a circumstance that would give me the most real concern. It was suggested to me by that real fondness I have for your MSS. for your kindness about which I feel the utmost gratitude. You would not, I think, leave them behind you; and are you aware of the danger you would run, if you settled entirely in France? Do you know, that the king of France is heir to all strangers who die in his dominions, by what they call the *Droit d'Aubaine?* Sometimes, by great interest and favour, persons have obtained a remission of this right in their lifetime: and yet that, even that, has not secured their effects from being embezzled. Old lady Sandwich had obtained this remission, and yet, though she left every thing to the present lord, her grandson, a man for whose rank one should have thought they would have had regard, the king's officers forced themselves into her house, after her death, and plundered. You see, if you go, I shall expect to have your MSS. deposited with me. Seriously, you must leave them in safe custody behind you.

Lord Essex's trial is printed with the state trials. In return for your obliging offer, I can acquaint you with a delightful publication of this winter, A Collection of Old Ballads and Poetry, in three volumes, many from Pepys's Collection at Cambridge. There were three such published between thirty and forty years ago, but very carelessly, and wanting many in this set: indeed, there were others, of a looser sort, which the present editor, who is a clergyman, thought it decent to omit.

When you go into Cheshire, and upon your ramble, may I trouble you with a commission? but about which you must promise me not to go a step out of your way. Mr. Bateman has got a cloister at Old Windsor, furnished with ancient wooden chairs,

most of them triangular, but all of various patterns, and carved and turned in the most uncouth and whimsical forms. He picked them up, one by one, for two, three, five, or six shillings a-piece from different farm houses in Herefordshire. I have long envied and coveted them. There may be such in poor cottages in so neighbouring a county as Cheshire. I should not grudge any expense for purchase or carriage; and should be glad even of a couple such for my cloister here. When you are copying inscriptions in a churchyard in any village, think of me, and step into the first cottage you see; but don't take further trouble than that.

I long to know what your bundle of MSS. from Cheshire contains.

My bower is determined, but not at all what it is to be. Though I write romances, I cannot tell how to build all that belongs to them. Madame Danois, in the Fairy Tales, used to *tapestry* them with *jonquils;* but as that furniture will not last above a fortnight in the year, I shall prefer something more huckaback. I have decided, that the outside shall be of *treillage*, which, however, I shall not commence, till I have again seen some of old Louis's old fashioned *galanteries* at Versailles. Rosamond's bower you, and I, and Tom Hearne know, was a labyrinth: but, as my territory will admit of a very short clew, I lay aside all thoughts of a mazy habitation; though a bower is very different from an arbour, and must have more chambers than one. In short, I both know, and don't know, what it should be. I am almost afraid I must go and read Spenser, and wade through his allegories and drawling stanzas, to get at a picture. But, good night! You see how one gossips, when one is alone, and at quiet on one's own dunghill! Well, it may be trifling; yet it is such trifling as ambition never is happy enough to know. Ambition orders palaces; but it is content that chats for a page or two over a bower. Yours ever.

LETTER XXIV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Strawberry Hill, July 28, 1765.

THE less one is disposed, if one has any sense, to talk of one's self to people that inquire only out of compliment, and do not listen to the answer, the more satisfaction one feels in indulging a self-complacency, by sighing to those that really sympathize with our griefs. Do not think it is pain that makes me give this low-spirited air to my letter. No, it is the prospect of what is to come, not the sensation of what is passing, that affects me. The loss of youth is melancholy enough; but to enter into old age, through the gate of infirmity, most disheartening. My health and spirits made me take but slight notice of the transition; and, under the persuasion of temperance being a talisman, I marched boldly on towards the descent of the hill, knowing I must fall at last, but not suspecting that I should stumble by the way. This confession explains the mortification I feel. A month's confinement, to one who never kept his bed a day, is a stinging lesson, and has humbled my insolence to almost indifference. Judge then how little I interest myself about public events. I know nothing of them since I came hither, where I had not only the disappointment of not growing better, but a bad return in one of my feet; so that I am still wrapped up, and upon a couch. It was the more unlucky, as lord Hertford is come to England for a very few days. He has offered to come to me, but as I then should see him only for some minutes, I propose be-

ing carried to town to-morrow. It will be so long before I can expect to be able to travel, that my French journey will certainly not take place so soon as I intended, and if lord Hertford goes to Ireland, I shall be still more fluctuating; for though the duke and duchess of Richmond will replace them at Paris, and are as eager to have me with them, I have had so many more years heaped upon me within this month, that I have not the conscience to trouble young people, when I can no longer be as juvenile as they are. Indeed, I shall think myself decrepit, till I can again saunter into the garden in my slippers, and without my hat, in all weathers,—a point I am determined to regain, if possible; for even this experience cannot make me resign my temperance and my hardiness. I am tired of the world, its politics, its pursuits, and its pleasures, but it will cost me some struggles before I submit to be tender and careful. Can I ever stoop to the regimen of old age? I do not wish to dress up a withered person, nor drag it about to public places; but to sit in one's room, clothed warmly, expecting visits from folks I don't wish to see, and tended and flattered by relations impatient for one's death! let the gout do its worst, as expeditiously as it can; it would be more welcome in my stomach than in my limbs. I am not made to bear a course of nonsense and advice, but must play the fool in my own way to the last,—alone with all my heart, if I cannot be with the very few I wish to see; but to depend for comfort on others, who would be no comfort to me, this surely is not a state to be preferred to death; and nobody can have truly enjoyed the advantages of youth, health, and spirits, who is content to exist without the two last, which alone bear any resemblance to the first.

You see how difficult it is to conquer my proud spirit: low and weak as I am, I think my resolution and perseverance will get the better, and that I shall still be a gay shadow; at least I will impose any severity upon myself rather than humour the gout, and sink into that indulgence with which most people treat it. Bodily liberty is as dear to me as mental, and I would as soon flatter any other tyrant as the gout, my whiggism extending as much to my health as to my principles, and being as willing to part with life, when I cannot preserve it, as your uncle Algernon when his freedom was at stake. Adieu! Yours ever.

LETTER XXV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Saturday, Aug. 31, 1765, Strawberry Hill.

I THOUGHT it would happen so; that I should not see you before I left England! Indeed, I may as well give you quite up, for every year reduces our intercourse. I am prepared, because it must happen, if I live, to see my friends drop off; but my mind was not turned to see them entirely separated from me while they live. This is very uncomfortable, but so are many things! Well, I will go and try to forget you all. All! God knows *the all* that I have left to forget is small enough; but the warm heart, that gave me affections, is not so easily laid aside. If I could divest myself of that, I should not, I think, find much cause for friendship remaining; you, against whom I have no complaint, but that you satisfy yourself with loving me without any desire of seeing me, are one of the very last that I wish to preserve. But I will say no more on a subject that my heart is too full of.

I shall set out on Monday se'n-

night, and force myself to believe that I am glad to go; and yet this will be my chief joy, for I promise myself little pleasure in arriving. Can you think me boy enough to be fond of a new world at my time of life? If I did not hate the world I know, I should not seek another. My greatest amusement will be in reviving old ideas. The memory of what made impressions on one's youth is ten times dearer than any new pleasure can be. I shall probably write to you often, for I am not disposed to communicate myself to any thing that I have not known these thirty years. My mind is such a compound, from the vast variety that I have seen, acted, pursued, that it would cost me too much pains to be intelligible to young persons, if I had a mind to open myself to them. They certainly do not desire I should. You like my gossipping *to* you, though you so seldom gossip *with* me. The trifles that amuse my mind are the only points I value now. I have seen the vanity of every thing serious, and the falsehood of every thing that pretended to be serious. I go to see French plays and buy French china, not to know their ministers, to look into their government, or think of the interests of nations—in short, unlike most people that are growing old, I am convinced that nothing is charming but what appeared important in one's youth, which afterwards passes for follies. Oh! but those follies were sincere; if the pursuits of age are so, they are sincere alone to self-interest. Thus I think, and have no other care but not to think aloud. I would not have respectable youth think me an old fool. For the old knaves, they may suppose me one of their number, if they please; I shall not be so—but neither the one nor the other shall know what I am. I have done with them all, shall amuse myself as well as I can, and think as little as I can; a pretty hard task for an active mind.

Direct your letters to Arlington Street, whence Favre will take care to convey them to me. I leave him to manage all my affairs, and take no soul but Louis. I am glad I don't know your Mrs. Anne; her partiality would make me love her; and it is entirely incompatible with my present system to leave even a postern door open to any feeling, which would steal in, if I did not double bolt every avenue.

If you send me any parcel to Arlington Street, before Monday se'nnight, I will take great care of it. Many English books I conclude are to be bought at Paris. I am sure Richardson's works are, for they have stupified the whole French nation: I will not answer for our best authors. You may send me your list, and if I do not find them I can send you word, and you may convey them to me by Favre's means, who will know of messengers, &c. coming to Paris.

I have fixed no precise time for my absence. My wish is to like it enough to stay till February, which may happen, if I can support the first launching into new society. I know four or five very agreeable and sensible people there, as the Guerchys, madame de Mirepoix, madame de Boufflers, and lady Mary Chabot. These intimately, besides the duc de Nivernois, and several others that have been here. Then the Richmonds will follow me in a fortnight or three weeks, and their house will be a sort of home. I actually go into it at first, till I can suit myself with an apartment; but I shall take care to quit it before they come; for, though they are in a manner my children, I do not intend to adopt the rest of my countrymen; nor, when I quit the best company here, to live in the worst there; such are young travelling boys, and, what is

still worse, old travelling boys, governors.

Adieu! remember you have defrauded me of this summer; I will be amply repaid the next; so make your arrangements accordingly. Yours ever.

LETTER XXVI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Mr. Gray.

Paris, Jan. 25, 1766.

I AM much indebted to you for your kind letter and advice: and, though it is late to thank you for it, it is at least a stronger proof that I do not forget it. However, I am a little obstinate, as you know, on the chapter of health, and have persisted, through this Siberian winter, in not adding a grain to my clothes, and in going open-breasted, without an under waistcoat. In short, though I like extremely to live, it must be in my own way, as long as I can: it is not youth I court, but liberty; and I think making one's self tender is issuing a *general warrant* against one's own person. I suppose I shall submit to confinement when I cannot help it; but I am indifferent enough to life not to care if it ends soon after my prison begins.

I have not delayed so long to answer your letter from not thinking of it, or from want of matter, but from want of time. I am constantly occupied, engaged, amused, till I cannot bring a hundredth part of what I have to say into the compass of a letter. You will lose nothing by this: you know my volubility, when I am full of new subjects; and I have at least many hours of conversation for you at my return. One does not learn a whole nation in four or five months; but, for the time, few, I believe, have seen, studied, or got so much acquainted with the French as I have.

By what I said of their religious, or rather irreligious opinions, you must not conclude their people of quality atheists—at least not the men. Happily for them, poor souls! they are not capable of going so far into thinking. They assent to a great deal, because it is the fashion, and because they don't know how to contradict. They are ashamed to defend the Roman catholic religion, because it is quite exploded; but I am convinced they believe it in their hearts. They hate the parliaments and the philosophers, and are rejoiced that they may still idolize royalty. At present, too, they are a little triumphant: the court has shown a little spirit, and the parliaments much less: but as the duc de Choiseul, who is very fluttering, unsettled, and inclined to the philosophers, has made a compromise with the parliament of Bretagne, the parliaments might venture out again, if, as I fancy will be the case, they are not glad to drop a cause, of which they began to be a little weary of the inconveniences.

The generality of the men, and more than the generality, are dull and empty. They have taken up gravity, thinking it was philosophy and English, and so have acquired nothing in the room of their natural levity and cheerfulness. However, as their high opinion of their own country remains, for which they can no longer assign any reason, they are contemptuous and reserved, instead of being ridiculously, consequently pardonably, impertinent. I have wondered, knowing my own countrymen, that we had attained such a superiority. I wonder no longer, and have a little more respect for English *heads* than I had.

The women do not seem of the same country: if they are less gay than they were, they are more informed,—enough to make them very

conversable. I know six or seven with very superior understandings; some of them with wit, or with softness, or very good sense.

Madame Geoffrin, of whom you have heard much, is an extraordinary woman, with more common sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters, penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness—seldom a favourable one. She exacts and preserves, spite of her birth and their nonsensical prejudices about nobility, great court and attention. This she acquires by a thousand little arts and offices of friendship; and by a freedom and severity, which seems to be her sole end of drawing a concourse to her; for she insists on scolding those she inveigles to her. She has little taste and less knowledge, but protects artisans and authors, and courts a few people to have the credit of serving her dependants. She was bred under the famous madame Tencin, who advised her never to refuse any man; for, said her mistress, though nine in ten should not care a farthing for you, the tenth may live to be an useful friend. She did not adopt or reject the whole plan, but fully retained the purport of the maxim. In short, she is an epitome of empire, subsisting by rewards and punishments. Her great enemy, madame du Deffand, was for a short time mistress of the regent, is now very old and stone blind, but retains all her vivacity, wit, memory, judgment, passions, and agreeableness. She goes to operas, plays, suppers, and Versailles; gives suppers twice a week; has every thing new read to her; makes new songs and epigrams, aye, admirably; and remembers every one that has been made these fourscore years. She corresponds with Voltaire, dictates charming letters to him, contradicts him, is no bigot to him or any body, and laughs both at the clergy and the philosophers. In a dispute, into which she easily falls, she is very warm, and yet scarce ever in the wrong: her judgment on every subject is as just as possible; on every point of conduct as wrong as possible; for she is all love and hatred, passionate for her friends to enthusiasm, still anxious to be loved (I don't mean by lovers), and a vehement enemy, but openly. As she can have no amusement but conversation, the least solitude and ennui are insupportable to her, and put her into the power of several worthless people, who eat her suppers when they can eat nobody's of higher rank; wink to one another and laugh at her; hate her because she has forty times more parts—and venture to hate her because she is not rich. She has an old friend, whom I must mention, a monsieur Pondevelle, author of the Fat puni, and the Complaisant, and of those pretty novels the Comte de Cominge, the Siege of Calais, and les Malheurs de l'Amour. Would not you expect this old man to be very agreeable? He can be so, but seldom is: yet he has another very different and very amusing talent, the art of parody, and is unique in his kind. He composes tales to the tunes of long dances: for instance, he has adapted the Regent's Daphnis and Chloe to one, and made it ten times more indecent; but is so old, and sings it so well, that it is permitted in all companies. He has succeeded still better in *les caractères de la danse*, to which he has adapted words that express all the characters of love. With all this, he has not the least idea of cheerfulness in conversation; seldom speaks but on grave subjects, and not often on them; is a humorist, very supercilious, and wrapt up in admiration of his own country, as the only judge of his merit. His air and look are cold and forbidding; but ask him to sing, or praise his works, his eyes

and smiles open and brighten up. In short, I can shew him to you: the self-applauding poet in Hogarth's Rake's Progress, the second print, is so like his very features and very wig, that you would know him by it, if you came hither—for he certainly will not go to you.

Madame de Mirepoix's understanding is excellent of the useful kind, and can be so, when she pleases, of the agreeable kind. She has read, but seldom shews it, and has perfect taste. Her manner is cold, but very civil; and she conceals even the blood of Lorrain, without ever forgetting it. Nobody in France knows the world better, and nobody is personally so well with the king. She is false, artful, and insinuating beyond measure, when it is her interest, but indolent and a coward. She never had any passion but gaming, and always loses. For ever paying court, the sole produce of a life of art is to get money from the king to carry on a course of paying debts, or contracting new ones, which she discharges as fast as she is able. She advertised devotion to get made *dame du palais* to the queen; and the very next day this princess of Lorrain was seen riding backwards with madame Pompadour in the latter's coach. When the king was stabbed, and heartily frightened, the mistress took a panic too, and consulted d'Argenson, whether she had not best make off in time. He hated her, and said, "By all means." Madame de Mirepoix advised her to stay. The king recovered his spirits, d'Argenson was banished, and la marechale inherited part of the mistress's credit.—I must interrupt my history of illustrious women with an anecdote of monsieur de Maurepas, with whom I am much acquainted, and who has one of the few heads that approach to good ones, and who, luckily for us, was disgraced, and the marine dropped, because it was his favourite object and province. He employed Pondevelle to make a song on the Pompadour: it was clever and bitter, and did not spare even majesty. This was Maurepas absurd enough to sing at supper at Versailles. Banishment ensued; and, lest he should ever be restored, the mistress persuaded the king that he had poisoned her predecessor, madame de Chateauroux. Maurepas is very agreeable, and exceedingly cheerful; yet I have seen a transient silent cloud when politics are talked of.

Madame de Boufflers, who was in England, is a *scavante*, mistress of the prince of Conti, and very desirous of being his wife. She is two women, the upper and the lower. I need not tell you that the lower is gallant, and still has pretensions. The upper is very sensible too, and has a measured eloquence, that is just and pleasing; but all is spoiled by an unrelaxed attention to applause. You would think she was always sitting for her picture to her biographer.

Madame de Rochfort is different from all the rest. Her understanding is just and delicate; with a finesse of wit, that is the result of reflection. Her manner is soft and feminine, and, though a *sçavante*, without any declared pretensions. She is the *decent* friend of monsieur de Nivernois; for you must not believe a syllable of what you read in their novels.

* * * * * * *

The duc de Nivernois has parts, and writes at the top of the mediocre, but, as madame Geoffrin says, is *manqué par tout; guerrier manqué, ambassadeur manqué, homme d'affaires manqué*, and *auteur manqué*—no, he is not *homme de naissance manqué*.* He would think freely,

* He is deficient in every way—in war, in diplomacy, in business, and in authorship, but not in birth.

but has some ambition of being governor to the dauphin, and is more afraid of his wife and daughter, who are ecclesiastic fagots. The former out-chatters the duke of Newcastle; and the latter, madame de Gisors, exhausts Mr. Pitt's eloquence in defence of the archbishop of Paris. Monsieur de Nivernois lives in a small circle of dependent admirers, and madame de Rochfort is high priestess for a small salary of credit.

The duchess of Choiseul, the only young one of these heroines, is not very pretty, but has fine eyes, and is a little model in waxwork, which not being allowed to speak for some time as incapable, has a hesitation and modesty, the latter of which the court has not cured, and the former of which is atoned for by the most interesting sound of voice, and forgotten in the most elegant turn and propriety of expression. Oh! it is the gentlest, amiable, civil, little creature that ever came out of a fairy egg! So just in its phrases and thoughts, so attentive and good-natured! Every body loves it but its husband, who prefers her own sister, the duchesse de Grammont, an Amazonian, fierce, haughty dame, who loves and hates arbitrarily, and is detested. Madame de Choiseul, passionately fond of her husband, was the martyr of this union, but at last submitted with a good grace; has gained a little credit with him, and is still believed to idolize him. But I doubt it—she takes too much pains to profess it.

I cannot finish my list without adding a much more common character, but more complete in its kind than any of the foregoing, the marechale de Luxembourg. She has been very handsome, very abandoned, and very mischievous. Her beauty is gone, her lovers are gone, and she thinks the devil is coming. This dejection has softened her into being rather agreeable, for she has wit and good-breeding; but you would swear, by the restlessness of her person, and the horrors she cannot conceal, that she had signed the compact, and expected to be called upon in a week for the performance.

I could add many pictures, but none so remarkable. In those I send you, there is not a feature bestowed gratis or exaggerated. For the beauties, of which there are a few considerable, as mesdames de Brionne, de Monaco, et d'Egmont, they have not yet lost their characters, nor got any.

You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to curiosity alone. An accident unlocked the doors for me. The *passe-par-tout*, called the fashion, has made them fly open—and what do you think was that fashion? —I myself. Yes, like queen Elinor in the ballad, I sunk at Charing Cross, and have risen in the Fauxbourg St. Germain. A *plaisanterie* on Rousseau, whose arrival here in his way to you brought me acquainted with many anecdotes conformable to the idea I had conceived of him, got about, was liked much more than it deserved, spread like wildfire, and made me the subject of conversation. Rousseau's devotees were offended. Madame de Boufflers, with a tone of sentiment, and the accents of lamenting humanity, abused me heartily, and then complained to myself with the utmost softness. I acted contrition, but had liked to have spoiled all, by growing dreadfully tired of a second lecture from the prince of Conti, who took up the ball, and made himself the hero of a history wherein he had nothing to do. I listened, did not understand half he said (nor he neither), forgot the rest, said Yes when I should have said No, yawned when I should have smiled, and was very penitent when I should have rejoiced at my pardon. Madame de Boufflers was more dis-

tressed, for he owned twenty times more than I had said: she frowned, and made him signs: but she had wound up his clack, and there was no stopping it. The moment she grew angry, the lord of the house grew charmed, and it has been my fault if I am not at the head of a numerous sect: but when I left a triumphant party in England, I did not come hither to be at the head of a fashion. However, I have been sent for about like an African prince, or a learned canary bird, and was, in particular, carried by force to the princess of Talmond, the queen's cousin, who lives in a charitable apartment in the Luxembourg, and was sitting on a small bed hung with saints and Sobieskis, in a corner of one of those vast chambers, by two blinking tapers. I stumbled over a cat, a footstool, and a chamber-pot, in my journey to her presence. She could not find a syllable to say to me, and the visit ended with her begging a lap-dog. Thank the lord! though this is the first month, it is the last week, of my reign; and I shall resign my crown with great satisfaction to a *bouillie* of chestnuts, which is just invented, and whose annals will be illustrated by so many indigestions, that Paris will not want any thing else these three weeks. I will enclose the fatal letter after I have finished this enormous one; to which I will only add, that nothing has interrupted my Sevigné researches but the frost. The abbé de Malesherbes has given me full power to ransack Livry. I did not tell you, that by great accident, when I thought on nothing less, I stumbled on an original picture of the comte de Grammont.—Adieu! You are generally in London in March; I shall be there by the end of it. Yours ever.

LETTER XXVII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Mr. Gray.

Arlington Street, Feb. 18, 1768.

You have sent me a long and very obliging letter, and yet I am extremely out of humour with you. I saw *Poems by Mr. Gray* advertised: I called directly at Dodsley's, to know if this was to be more than a new edition. He was not at home himself, but his foreman told me he thought there were some new pieces, and notes to the whole. It was very unkind, not only to go out of town without mentioning them to me, without shewing them to me, but not to say a word of them in this letter. Do you think I am indifferent, or not curious, about what you write? I have ceased to ask you, because you have so long refused to shew me any thing. You could not suppose I thought that you never write. No; but I concluded you did not intend, at least yet, to publish what you had written. As you did intend it, I might have expected a month's preference. You will do me the justice to own, that I had always rather have seen your writings than have shewn you mine, which you know are the most hasty trifles in the world, and which, though I may be fond of the subject when fresh, I constantly forget in a very short time after they are published. This would sound like affectation to others, but will not to you. It would be affected, even to you, to say I am indifferent to fame. I certainly am not; but I am indifferent to almost any thing I have done to acquire it. The greater part are mere compilations; and no wonder they are, as you say, incorrect, when they are commonly written with people in the room, as Richard and the Noble Authors were. But I doubt there is a more intrinsic fault in them; which

is, that I cannot correct them. If I write tolerably, it must be at once; I can neither mend nor add. The articles of lord Capel and lord Peterborough, in the second edition of the Noble Authors, cost me more trouble than all the rest together: and you may perceive, that the worst part of Richard, in point of ease and style, is what relates to the papers you gave me on Jane Shore, because it was tacked on so long afterwards, and when my impetus was chilled. If, some time or other, you will take the trouble of pointing out the inaccuracies of it, I shall be much obliged to you: at present I shall meddle no more with it. It has taken its fate; nor did I mean to complain. I found it was condemned indeed beforehand, which was what I alluded to. Since publication (as has happened to me before) the success has gone beyond my expectation.

Not only at Cambridge, but here, there have been people wise enough to think me too free with the king of Prussia! A newspaper has talked of my known inveteracy to him. Truly, I love him as well as I do most kings. The greater offence is my reflection on lord Clarendon. It is forgotten that I had overpraised him before. Pray turn to the new State Papers, from which, *it is said*, he composed his history. You will find they are the papers from which he did *not* compose his history. And yet I admire my lord Clarendon more than these pretended admirers do. But I do not intend to justify myself. I can as little satisfy those who complain that I do not let them know what *really did* happen. If this inquiry can ferret out any truth, I shall be glad. I have picked up a few more circumstances. I now want to know what Perkin Warbeck's proclamation was, which Speed, in his history, says is preserved by bishop Leslie. If you look in Speed, perhaps you will be able to assist me.

The duke of Richmond and lord Lyttelton agree with you, that I have not disculpated Richard of the murder of Henry VI. I own to you, it is the crime of which, in my own mind, I believe him most guiltless. Had I thought he committed it, I should never have taken the trouble to apologize for the rest. I am not at all positive or obstinate on your other objections, nor know exactly what I believe on many points of this story. And I am so sincere, that, except a few notes hereafter, I shall leave the matter to be settled or discussed by others. As you have written much too little, I have written a great deal too much, and think only of finishing the two or three other things I have begun; and of those, nothing but the last volume of Painters is designed for the present public. What has one to do, when turned fifty, but really think of *finishing?*

I am much obliged and flattered by Mr. Mason's approbation, and particularly by having had almost the same thought with him. I said, "People need not be angry at my excusing Richard; I have not diminished their fund of hatred; I have only transferred it from Richard to Henry." Well, but I have found you close with Mason.—No doubt, cry prating I, something will come out.*—Oh! no—leave us, both of you, to Annabellas and Epistles to Ferney, that give Voltaire an account of his own tragedies; to Macarony fables, that are more unintelligible than Pilpay's are in the original; to Mr. Thornton's hurdy-gurdy poetry; and to Mr. ****, who has imitated himself worse than any fop in a magazine would have done. In truth, if you should abandon us, I could

* "I found him close with Swift."—"Indeed!"—"No doubt,"
Cries prating Balbus, "something will come out."
Pope's Epistle to Arbuthnot.

not wonder. When Garrick's prologues and epilogues, his own Cymons and farces, and the comedies of the fools that pay court to him, are the delight of the age, it does not deserve any thing better.

Pray read the new account of Corsica. What relates to Paoli will amuse you much. There is a deal about the island and its divisions, that one does not care a straw for. The author, Boswell, is a strange being, and, like ****, has a rage of knowing any body that ever was talked of. He forced himself upon me at Paris, in spite of my teeth and my doors, and I see has given a foolish account of all he could pick up from me about king Theodore. He then took an antipathy to me on Rousseau's account, abused me in the newspapers, and exhorted Rousseau to do so too; but, as he came to see me no more, I forgave all the rest. I see he now is a little sick of Rousseau himself, but I hope it will not cure him of his anger to me. However, his book will, I am sure, entertain you.

I will add but a word or two more. I am criticised for the expression *tinker up* in the preface. Is this one of those that you object to? I own I think such a low expression, placed to ridicule an absurd instance of wise folly, very forcible. Replace it with an elevated word or phrase, and, to my conception, it becomes as flat as possible.

George Selwyn says I may, if I please, write historic doubts on the present duke of G**** too. Indeed, they would be doubts, for I know nothing certainly.

Will you be so kind as to look into Leslie de rebus Scotorum, and see if Perkin's proclamation is there, and, if there, how authenticated? You will find in Speed my reason for asking this.

I have written in such a hurry, I believe you will scarce be able to read my letter: and, as I have just been writing French, perhaps the sense may not be clearer than the writing. Adieu! Yours ever.

LETTER XXVIII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1768.

No, I cannot be so false as to say I am glad you are pleased with your situation. You are so apt to take root, that it requires ten years to dig you out again when you once begin to settle. As you go pitching your tent up and down, I wish you were still more a Tartar, and shifted your quarters perpetually. Yes, I will come and see you; but tell me first, when do your duke and duchess travel to the north? I know he is a very amiable lad, and I do not know that she is not as amiable a *laddess*, but I had rather see their house comfortably, when they are not there.

I perceive the deluge fell upon you, before it reached us. It began here but on Monday last, and then rained near eight and forty hours without intermission. My poor hay has not a dry thread to its back. I have had a fire these three days. In short, every summer one lives in a state of mutiny and murmur, and I have found the reason: it is because we will affect to have a summer, and we have no title to any such thing. Our poets learnt their trade of the Romans, and so adopted the terms of their masters. They talk of shady groves, purling streams, and cooling breezes, and we get sore throats and agues with attempting to realize these visions. Master Damon writes a song, and invites miss Chloe to enjoy the cool of the evening, and the deuce a bit have we of any such thing as a cool evening. Zephyr is a north-east wind, that makes Damon button

up to the chin, and pinches Chloe's nose till it is red and blue; and then they cry, *this is a bad summer*, as if we ever had any other. The best sun we have is made of Newcastle coal, and I am determined never to reckon upon any other. We ruin ourselves with inviting over foreign trees, and make our houses clamber up hills to look at prospects. How our ancestors would laugh at us, who knew there was no being comfortable, unless you had a high hill before your nose, and a thick warm wood at your back! Taste is too freezing a commodity for us, and, depend upon it, will go out of fashion again.

There is indeed a natural warmth in this country, which, as you say, I am very glad not to enjoy any longer; I mean the hot house in St. Stephen's chapel. My own sagacity makes me very vain, though there was very little merit in it. I had seen so much of all parties, that I had little esteem left for any; it is most indifferent to me who is in, or who is out, or which is set in the pillory, Mr. Wilkes or my lord Mansfield. I see the country going to ruin, and no man with brains enough to save it. That is mortifying; but what signifies who has the undoing it? I seldom suffer myself to think on this subject: *my* patriotism could do no good, and my philosophy can make me be at peace.

I am sorry you are likely to lose your poor cousin lady Hinchinbrook; I heard a very bad account of her when I was last in town. Your letter to madame Roland shall be taken care of; but as you are so scrupulous of making me pay postage, I must remember not to overcharge you, as I can frank my idle letters no longer; therefore, good night! Yours ever.

P. S. I was in town last week, and found Mr. Chute still confined. He had a return in his shoulder, but I think it more rheumatism than gout.

LETTER XXIX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Monsieur de Voltaire.

Strawberry Hill, June 21, 1768.

Sir,

You read English with so much more facility than I can write French, that I hope you will excuse my making use of my own tongue to thank you for the honour of your letter. If I employed your language, my ignorance in it might betray me into expressions that would not do justice to the sentiments I feel at being so distinguished.

It is true, sir, I have ventured to contest the history of Richard the Third, as it has been delivered to us: and I shall obey your commands, and send it to you, though with fear and trembling; for though I have given it to the world, as it is called, yet, as you have justly observed, *that* world is comprised within a very small circle of readers, and undoubtedly I could not expect that you would do me the honour of being one of the number. Nor do I fear you, sir, only as the first genius in Europe, who have illustrated every science; I have a more intimate dependence on you than you suspect. Without knowing it, you have been my master; and perhaps the sole merit that may be found in my writings is owing to my having studied yours: so far, sir, am I from living in that state of barbarism and ignorance, with which you tax me when you say *que vous m'êtes peut-être inconnu*. I was not a stranger to your reputation very many years ago, but remember to have then thought you honoured our house by dining with my mother, though I was at school, and had not the happiness of seeing you: and yet my father was in a situation that might have dazzled eyes older than mine. The plain name of that father, and the pride of hav-

ing had so excellent a father, to whose virtues truth at last does justice, is all I have to boast. I am a very private man, distinguished by neither dignities nor titles, which I have never done any thing to deserve; but as I am certain that titles alone would not have procured me the honour of your notice, I am content without them.

But, sir, if I can tell you nothing good of myself, I can at least tell you something bad; and, after the obligation you have conferred on me by your letter, I should blush if you heard it from any body but myself. I had rather incur your indignation than deceive you. Some time ago I took the liberty to find fault in print with the criticisms you had made on our Shakspeare. This freedom, and no wonder, never came to your knowledge. It was in a preface to a trifling romance, much unworthy of your regard, but which I shall send you, because I cannot accept even the honour of your correspondence, without making you judge whether I deserve it. I might retract, I might beg your pardon; but having said nothing but what I thought, nothing illiberal, or unbecoming a gentleman, it would be treating you with ingratitude and impertinence, to suppose that you would either be offended with my remarks, or pleased with my recantation. You are as much above wanting flattery, as I am above offering it to you. You would despise me, and I should despise myself—a sacrifice I cannot make, sir, even to you.

Though it is impossible not to know *you*, sir, I must confess my ignorance on the other part of your letter. I know nothing of the history of monsieur de Genonville, nor can tell whether it is true or false, as this is the first time I ever heard of it. But I will take care to inform myself as well as I can, and, if you allow me to trouble you again, will send you the exact account, as far as I can obtain it. I love my country, but I do not love any of my countrymen that have been capable, if they have been so, of a foul assassination. I should have made this inquiry directly, and informed you of the result of it in this letter, had I been in London; but the respect I owe you, sir, and my impatience to thank you for so unexpected a mark of your favour, made me choose not to delay my gratitude for a single post. I have the honour to be, sir, your most obliged and most obedient humble servant.

LETTER XXX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Monsieur de Voltaire.

Strawberry Hill, July 27, 1768.

ONE can never, sir, be sorry to have been in the wrong, when one's errors are pointed out to one in so obliging and masterly a manner. Whatever opinion I may have of Shakespeare, I should think him to blame, if he could have seen the letter you have done me the honour to write to me, and yet not conform to the rules you have there laid down. When he lived, there had not been a Voltaire both to give laws to the stage, and to show on what good sense those laws were founded. Your art, sir, goes still farther: for you have supported your arguments, without having recourse to the best authority, your own works. It was my interest, perhaps, to defend barbarism and irregularity. A great genius is in the right, on the contrary, to show, that when correctness, nay, when perfection is demanded, he can still shine, and be himself, whatever fetters are imposed on him. But I will say no more on this head; for I am neither so unpolished as to tell you to your face how much I admire you,

nor, though I have taken the liberty to vindicate Shakespeare against your criticisms, am I vain enough to think myself an adversary worthy of you. I am much more proud of receiving laws from you than of contesting them. It was bold in me to dispute with you, even before I had the honour of your acquaintance; it would be ungrateful now, when you have not only taken notice of me, but forgiven me. The admirable letter you have been so good as to send me, is a proof that you are one of those truly great and rare men, who know at once how to conquer and to pardon.

I have made all the inquiry I could into the story of M. de Jumonville; and, though your and our accounts disagree, I own I do not think, sir, that the strongest evidence is in our favour. I am told we allow he was killed by a party of our men, going to the Ohio. Your countrymen say, he was going with a flag of truce. The commanding officer of our party said, M. de Jumonville was going with hostile intentions; and that very hostile orders were found after his death in his pocket. Unless that officer had proved that he had previous intelligence of those orders, I doubt he will not be justified by finding them afterwards; for I am not at all disposed to believe that he had the foreknowledge of your hermit, who pitched the old woman's nephew into the river, because *ce jeune homme auroit assassiné sa tante dans un an.**

I am grieved that such disputes should ever subsist between two nations, who have every thing in themselves to create happiness, and who may find enough in each other to love and admire. It is your benevolence, sir, and your zeal for softening the manners of mankind; it is the doctrine of peace and amity which you preach, that have raised my esteem for you even more than the brightness of your genius. France may claim you in the latter light, but all nations have a right to call you their countryman *du coté du cœur*. It is on the strength of that connexion that I beg you, sir, to accept the homage of, sir, your most obedient humble servant.

* This young man would have assassinated his aunt in a year.

LETTER XXXI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 27, 1774.

I SHOULD be very ungrateful indeed, if I thought of complaining of you, who are goodness itself to me: and when I did not receive letters from you, I concluded it happened from your eccentric positions. I am amazed, that, hurried as you have been, and your eyes and thoughts crowded with objects, you have been able to find time to write me so many and such long letters, over and above all those to lady Ailesbury, your daughter, brother, and other friends. Even lord Strafford brags of your frequent remembrance. That your superabundance of royal beams would dazzle you, I never suspected. Even I enjoy for you the distinctions you have received—though I should hate such things for myself, as they are particularly troublesome to me, and I am particularly awkward under them; and as I abhor the king of Prussia, and, if I passed through Berlin, should have no joy like avoiding him—like one of our countrymen, who changed horses at Paris, and asked what the name of that town was. All the other civilities you have received I am perfectly happy in. The Germans are certainly a civil, well-meaning people, and I believe one of the least corrupted nations in Europe. I don't

think them very agreeable; but who do I think are so? A great many French women, some English men, and a few English women—exceedingly few French men. Italian women are the grossest, vulgarest of the sex. If an Italian man has a grain of sense, he is a buffoon——So much for Europe.

I have already told you, and so must lady Ailesbury, that my courage fails me, and I dare not meet you at Paris. As the period is arrived when the gout used to come, it is never a moment out of my head. Such a suffering, such a helpless condition, as I was in for five months and a half, two years ago, makes me tremble from head to foot. I should die at once if seized in a French inn; or what, if possible, would be worse, at Paris, where I must admit every body. I, who you know can hardly bear to see even you when I am ill, and who shut up myself here, and would not let lord and lady Hertford come near me—I, who have my room washed, though in bed, how could I bear French dirt? In short, I, who am so capricious, and whom you are pleased to call a philosopher, I suppose because I have given up every thing but my own will—how could I keep my temper, who have no way of keeping my temper but by keeping it out of every body's way! No, I must give up the satisfaction of being with you at Paris. I have just learnt to give up my pleasures, but I cannot give up my pains, which such selfish people as I, who have suffered much, grow to compose into a system, that they are partial to because it is their own. I must make myself amends when you return: you will be more stationary, I hope, for the future; and if I live I shall have intervals of health. In lieu of me, you will have a charming succedaneum, lady ******. Her father, who is more a hero than I, is packing up his decrepit bones, and goes too. I wish she may not have him to nurse, instead of diverting herself.

The present state of your country is, that it is drowned, and dead drunk; all water without, and wine within. Opposition for the next elections every where, even in Scotland; not from party, but as laying out money to advantage. In the head quarters, indeed, party is not out of the question: the day after to-morrow will be a great bustle in the city for a lord mayor,* and all the winter in Westminster, where lord Mahon and Humphrey Cotes oppose the court. Lady **** is saving her money at Ludlow and Powis castles by keeping open house day and night against sir Watkin Williams, and fears she shall be kept there till the general election. It has rained this whole month, and we have got another inundation. The Thames is as broad as your Danube, and all my meadows are under water. Lady Browne and I, coming last Sunday night from lady Blandford's, were in a piteous plight. The ferry-boat was turned round by the current, and carried to Isleworth. Then we ran against the piers of our new bridge, and the horses were frightened. Luckily my cicisbea was a catholic, and screamed to so many saints, that some of them at the nearest alehouse came and saved us, or I should have had no more gout, or what I dreaded I should; for I concluded we should be carried ashore somewhere, and be forced to wade through the mud up to my middle. So you see one may wrap one's self up in flannel and be in danger, without visiting all the armies on the face of the globe, and putting the immortality of one's chaise to the proof.

I am ashamed of sending you but three sides of smaller paper in answer to seven large—but what can I do? I see nothing, know nothing,

* When Mr. Wilkes was elected.

do nothing. My castle is finished, I have nothing new to read, I am tired of writing, I have no new or old bit for my printer. I have only black hoods around me; or, if I go to town, the family party in Grosvenor Street. One trait will give you a sample of how I pass my time, and made me laugh, as it put me in mind of you; at least it was a fit of absense, much more likely to have happened to you than to me. I was playing at eighteenpenny tredrille with the duchess of Newcastle and lady Browne, and certainly not much interested in the game. I cannot recollect nor conceive what I was thinking of, but I pushed the cards very gravely to the duchess, and said, "*Doctor*, you are to deal." You may guess at their astonishment, and how much it made us all laugh. I wish it may make you smile a moment, or that I had any thing better to send you. Adieu most affectionately. Yours ever.

LETTER XXXII.

*The Hon. Horace Walpole to Dr. Gem.**

Arlington Street, April 4, 1776.

It is but fair, when one quits one's party, to give notice to those one abandons; at least modern patriots, who often imbibe their principles of honour at Newmarket, use that civility. You and I, dear sir, have often agreed in our political notions; and you, I fear, will die without changing your opinion. For my part, I must confess I am totally altered; and, instead of being a warm partisan of liberty, now admire nothing but despotism. You will naturally ask, what place I have gotten, or what bribe I have taken? Those are the criterions of political changes in England; but, as my conversion is of foreign extraction, I shall not be the richer for it. In one word, it is the *relation du lit de justice** that has operated the miracle. When two ministers† are found so humane, so virtuous, so excellent, as to study nothing but the welfare and deliverance of the people; when a king listens to such excellent men; and when a parliament, from the basest, most interested motives, interposes to intercept the blessing, must I not change my opinions, and admire arbitrary power? Or can I retain my sentiments, without varying the object?

Yes, sir, I am shocked at the conduct of the parliament—one would think it was an English one! I am scandalized at the speeches of the *avocat general*,‡ who sets up the odious interests of the nobility and clergy against the cries and groans of the poor, and who employs his wicked eloquence to tempt the good young monarch, by personal views, to sacrifice the mass of his subjects to the privileges of the few. But why do I call it eloquence? The fumes of interest had so clouded his rhetoric, that he falls into a downright Iricism. He tells the king, that the intended tax on the proprietors of land will affect the property, not only of the rich but of the poor. I should be glad to know what is the property of the poor? Have the poor landed estates? Are those who have landed estates the poor? Are the poor, that will suffer by the tax, the wretched labourers, who are dragged from their famishing families to work on the roads? But *it is* wicked eloquence when it finds a reason, or gives a reason, for continuing the abuse. The advocate tells the king,

* An English physician long settled at Paris, no less esteemed for his professional knowledge than for his kind attention to the poor, who applied to him for medical assistance.

* The first *lit de justice* held by Louis XVI.
† Messrs. de Malesherbes and Turgot.
‡ Monsieur de Seguier.

those abuses are *presque consacrés par l'ancienneté.* Indeed, he says all that can be said for nobility; it is *consacrée par l'ancienneté;* and thus the length of the pedigree of abuses renders them respectable!

His arguments are as contemptible when he tries to dazzle the king by the great names of Henry Quatre and Sully, of Louis XIV. and Colbert, two couple whom nothing but a mercenary orator would have classed together. Nor, were all four equally venerable, would it prove any thing. Even good kings and good ministers, if such have been, may have erred; nay, may have done the best they could. They would not have been good if they wished their errors should be preserved the longer they had lasted.

In short, sir, I think this resistance of the parliament to the adorable reformation planned by Messrs. de Turgot and Malesherbes, is more phlegmatically scandalous than the wildest tyranny of despotism. I forget what the nation was, that refused liberty when it was offered. This opposition to so noble a work is worse. A whole people may refuse its own happiness; but these profligate magistrates resist happiness for others, for millions, for posterity! Nay, do they not half vindicate Maupeou, who crushed them? And you, dear sir, will you now chide my apostasy? Have I not cleared myself to your eyes? I do not see a shadow of sound logic in all monsieur Seguier's speeches, but in his proposing that the soldiers should work on the roads, and that passengers should contribute to their fabric; though, as France is not so luxuriously mad as England, I do not believe passengers could support the expense of the roads. That argument, therefore, is like another, that the avocat proposes to the king, and which, he modestly owns, he believes would be impracticable.

I beg your pardon, sir, for giving you this long trouble; but I could not help venting myself, when shocked to find such renegade conduct in a parliament, that I was rejoiced had been restored. Poor human kind! is it always to breed serpents from its own bowels? In one country it chooses its representatives, and they sell it and themselves—in others it exalts despots—in another it resists the despot when he consults the good of his people!—— Can we wonder mankind is wretched, when men are such beings? Parliaments run wild with loyalty, when America is to be enslaved or butchered. They rebel, when their country is to be set free!—I am not surprised at the idea of the devil being always at our elbows. They who invented him, no doubt could not conceive how men could be so atrocious to one another, without the intervention of a fiend. Don't you think, if he had never been heard of before, that he would have been invented on the late partition of Poland? Adieu, dear sir! Yours most sincerely.

LETTER XXXIII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Rev. Mr. Cole.

Strawberry Hill, June 3, 1773.

I WILL not dispute with you, dear sir, on patriots and politics. One point is past controversy, that the ministers have ruined this country; and if the church of England's satisfied with being reconciled to the church of Rome, and thinks it a compensation for the loss of America, and all credit in Europe, she is as silly an old woman as any granny in an almshouse. France is very glad we are grown such fools, and soon saw that the presbyterian Dr. Franklin had more sense than our ministers together. She has got over all her prejudices, has expelled the Jesuits, and made the protestant

Swiss, Necker, her comptroller general. It is a little woeful, that we are relapsing into the nonsense the rest of Europe is shaking off; and it is the more deplorable, as we know, by repeated experience, that this country has always been disgraced by Tory administrations. The rubric is the only gainer by them in a few martyrs.

I do not know yet what is settled about the spot of lord Chatham's interment. I am no more an enthusiast to his memory than you. I knew his faults and his defects; yet one fact cannot only not be controverted, but I doubt more remarkable every day.—I mean, that under him we attained not only our highest elevation, but the most solid authority in Europe. When the names of Marlborough and Chatham are still pronounced with awe in France, our little cavils make a puny sound. Nations that are beaten cannot be mistaken. I have been looking out for your friend a set of my heads of painters, and find I want six or seven. I think I have some odd ones in town; if I have not, I will have deficiencies supplied from the plates, though I fear they will not be good, as so many have been taken off. I should be very ungrateful for all your kindnesses, if I neglected any opportunity of obliging you, dear sir. Indeed, our old and unalterable friendship is creditable to us both, and very uncommon between two persons who differ so much in their opinions relative to church and state. I believe the reason is, that we are both sincere, and never meant to take advantage of our principles, which I allow is too common on both sides, and, I own too, fairly, more common on my side of the question than on yours. There is a reason too for that: the honours and emoluments are in the gift of the crown: the nation has no separate treasury to reward its friends.

If Mr. Tyrrwhit has opened his eyes to Chatterton's forgeries, there is an instance of conviction against strong prejudice! I have drawn up an account of my transaction with that marvellous young man; you shall see it one day or other, but I do not intend to print it. I have taken a thorough dislike to being an author; and if it would not look like begging you to compliment me, by contradicting me, I would tell you, what I am most seriously convinced of, that I find what small share of parts I had grown dulled—and when I perceive it myself, I may well believe that others would not be less sharpsighted. It is very natural; mine were spirits rather than parts; and as time has abated the one, it must surely destroy their resemblance to the other; pray don't say a syllable in reply on this head, or I shall have done exactly what I said I would not do. Besides, as you have always been too partial to me, I am on my guard; and when I will not expose myself to my enemies, I must not listen to the prejudices of my friends; and as nobody is more partial to me than you, there is nobody I must trust less in that respect. Yours most sincerely.

LETTER XXXIV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Rev. Mr. Cole.

Strawberry Hill, June 10, 1778.

I AM as impatient and in as much hurry as you was, dear sir, to clear myself from the slightest intention of censuring your politics. I know the sincerity and disinterested goodness of your heart; and when I must be convinced how little certain we are all of what is truth, it would be very presumptuous to condemn the opinions of any good man, and still less an old and unalterable friend, as I

have ever found you. The destruction that violent arbitrary principles have drawn on this blinded country has moved my indignation. We never were a great and happy country till the Revolution. The system of these days tended to overturn, and has overturned, that establishment, and brought on the disgraces that ever attended the foolish and wicked councils of the house of Stuart. If man is a rational being, he has a right to make use of his reason, and to enjoy his liberty. We, we alone almost, had a constitution that every other nation upon earth envied or ought to envy. This is all I contend for. I will give you up whatever descriptions of men you please; that is, the leaders of parties, not the principles. These cannot change, those generally do, when power falls into the hands of them or their party, because men are corruptible, which truth is not. But the more the leaders of a party dedicated to liberty are apt to change, the more I adore the principle, because it shews that extent of power is not to be trusted even with those that are the most sensible of the value of liberty. Man is a domineering animal; and it has not only been my principle, but my practice too, to quit every body at the gate of the palace. I trust we shall not much differ on these outlines: but we will bid adieu to the subject: it is never an agreeable one to those who do not mean to make a trade of it.

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LETTER XXXV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Rev. Mr. Cole.

Berkeley Square, May 4, 1781.

I SHALL not only be ready to shew Strawberry Hill, at any time he chooses, to Dr. Farmer, as your friend, but to be honoured with his acquaintance; though I am very shy now of contracting new. I have great respect for his character and abilities, and judicious taste; and am very clear, that he has elucidated Shakspeare in a more reasonable and satisfactory manner than any of his affected commentators, who only complimented him with learning that he had not, in order to display their own.

Pray give me timely notice whenever I am likely to see Dr. Farmer, that I may not be out of the way, when I can have an opportunity of shewing attention to a friend of yours, and pay a small part of your gratitude to him. There shall be a bed at his service; for you know Strawberry cannot be seen in a moment; nor are Englishmen so *liants* as to get acquainted in the time they are walking through a house.

But now, my good sir, how could you suffer your prejudiced partiality to me to run away with you so extravagantly as to call me one of the greatest characters of the age? You are too honest to flatter, too much a hermit to be interested, and I am too powerless and insignificant to be an object of court, were you capable of paying it from mercenary views. I know, then, that it could proceed from nothing but the warmth of your heart. But if you are blind towards me, I am not so to myself. I know not how others feel on such occasions; but if any one happens to praise me, all my faults rush into my face, and make me turn my eyes inward and outward with horror.—What am I, but a poor old skeleton, tottering towards the grave, and conscious of ten thousand weaknesses, follies, and worse! And for talents, what are mine, but trifling and superficial; and, compared with those of men of real genius, most diminutive. Mine a great character! Mercy on me! I am a composition of

Anthony Wood and madame Danois, and I know not what trumpery writers. This is the least I can say to refute your panegyric, which I shall burn presently; for I will not have such an encomiastic letter found in my possession, lest I should seem to have been pleased with it. I enjoin you, as a penance, not to contradict one tittle I have said here; for I am not begging more compliments, and shall take it seriously ill if you ever pay me another. We have been friends above forty years; I am satisfied of your sincerity and affection; but does it become us, at past threescore each, to be saying fine things to one another? Consider how soon we shall both be nothing!

I assure you, with great truth, I am at this present very sick of my little vapour of fame. My tragedy has wandered into the hands of some banditti booksellers, and I am forced to publish it myself to prevent piracy. All I can do is to condemn it myself; and that I shall.

I am reading Mr. Pennant's new Welch tour; he has pleased me by making very handsome mention of you. But I will not do what I have been blaming.

My poor dear madame du Deffand's little dog is arrived. She made me promise to take care of it the last time I saw her; that I will most religiously, and make it as happy as is possible. I have not much curiosity to see your Cambridge Raphael, but great desire to see you, and will certainly this summer accept your invitation, which I take much kinder than your *great character*, though both flowed from the same friendship. Mine for you is exactly what it has been ever since you knew (and few men can boast so uninterrupted a friendship as yours and that of), &c.

P. S. I have seen the Monthly Review.

LETTER XXXVI.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Earl of Strafford.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 27, 1781

EACH fresh mark of your lordship's kindness and friendship calls on me for thanks and an answer: every other reason would enjoin me silence. I not only grow so old, but the symptoms of age increase so fast, that, as they advise me to keep out of the world, that retirement makes me less fit to be informing or entertaining. The philosophers who have sported on the verge of the tomb, or they who have *affected* to sport in the same situation, both tacitly implied that it was not out of their thoughts: and however dear what we are going to leave may be, all that is not particularly dear must cease to interest us much. If those reflections blend themselves with our gayest thoughts, must not their hue grow more dusty when public misfortunes and disgraces cast a general shade? The age, it is true, soon emerges out of every gloom, and wantons as before. But does not that levity imprint a still deeper melancholy on those who do think? Have any of our calamities corrected us? Are we not revelling on the brink of the precipice? Does administration grow more sage, or desire that we should grow more sober? Are these themes for letters, my dear lord? Can one repeat common news with indifference, while our shame is writing for future history by the pens of all our numerous enemies? When did England see two whole armies lay down their arms, and surrender themselves prisoners? Can venal addresses efface such stigmas, that will be recorded in every country in Europe? Or will such disgraces have no consequences? Is not America lost to us? Shall we offer up more human victims to

the demon of obstinacy? and shall we tax ourselves deeper to furnish out the sacrifice? These are thoughts I cannot stifle at the moment that enforces them; and though I do not doubt but the same spirit of dissipation that has swallowed up all our principles, will reign again in three days with its wonted sovereignty, I had rather be silent than vent my indignation. Yet I cannot talk, for I cannot think, on any other subject. It was not six days ago, that, in the height of four raging wars, I saw in the papers an account of the opera, and of the dresses of the company; and thence the town, and thence of course the whole nation, were informed, that Mr. F***** had very little powder in his hair. Would not one think, that our newspapers were penned by boys just come from school, for the information of their sisters and cousins? Had we had Gazettes and Morning Posts in those days, would they have been filled with such tittle-tattle after the battle of Agincourt, or in the more resembling weeks after the battle of Naseby? Did the French trifle equally even during the ridiculous war of the Fronde? If they were as impertinent then, at least they had wit in their levity. We are monkeys in conduct, and as clumsy as bears when we try to gambol. Oh, my lord! I have no patience with my country, and shall leave it without regret! Can we be proud when all Europe scorns us? It was wont to envy us, sometimes to hate us, but never despised us before. James the First was contemptible, but he did not lose an America! His eldest grandson sold us, his younger lost us; but we kept ourselves. Now we have run to meet the ruin—and it is coming!

I beg your lordship's pardon if I have said too much, but I do not believe I have. You have never sold yourself, and, therefore, have not been accessary to our destruction. You must be happy *now* not to have a son, who would live to grovel in the dregs of England. Your lordship has long been so wise as to secede from the follies of your countrymen. May you and lady Strafford long enjoy the tranquillity that has been your option even in better days! and may you amuse yourself without giving loose to such reflections as have overflowed in this letter from your devoted humble servant.

LETTER XXXVII.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 1, 1783.

IT would be great happiness indeed to me, my dear lord, if such nothings as my letters could contribute to any part of your lordship's; but as your own partiality bestows their chief merit on them, you see they owe more to your friendship than to the writer. It is not my interest to depreciate them; much less to undermine the foundation of their sole worth. Yet it would be dishonest not to warn your lordship, that if my letters have had any intrinsic recommendation, they must lose of it every day. Years and frequent returns of gout have made a ruin of me. Dulness, in the form of indolence, grows upon me. I am inactive, lifeless, and so indifferent to most things, that I neither inquire after, nor remember, any topics that might enliven my letters. Nothing is so insipid as my way of passing my time. But I need not specify what my letters speak: they can have no spirit left, and would be perfectly inanimate, if attachment and gratitude to your lordship were as liable to be extinguished by old age as our more amusing qualities. I make no new connexions; but cherish those that

remain with all the warmth of youth and the piety of grey hairs.

The weather here has been, and is, with very few intervals, sultry to this moment. I think it has been of service to me; though, by overheating myself, I had a few days of lameness. The harvest is half over already all round us, and so pure, that not a poppy or cornflower is to be seen. Every field seems to have been weeded, like B * * * * *'s bowling-green. If Ceres, who is at least as old as many of our fashionable ladies, loves tricking herself out in flowers as they do, she must be mortified; and with more reason, for she looks well always with top-knots of ultramarine and vermilion, which modern goddesses do not for half so long as they think they do. As Providence showers so many blessings on us, I wish the peace may confirm them. Necessary I am sure it was; and when it cannot restore us, where should we have been had the war continued? Of our situation and prospect I confess my opinion is melancholy; not from present politics, but from past. We flung away the most brilliant position; I doubt for a long season. With politics I have totally done. I wish the present ministers may last, for I think better of their principles than of those of their opponents (with a few salvos on both sides), and so I do of their abilities. But it would be folly in me to concern myself about new generations: how little a way can I see of their progress!

I am rather surprised at the new countess of * * * * *. How could a woman be ambitious of resembling Prometheus, to be pawed, and clawed, and gnawed by a vulture? I beg your earldom's pardon, but I could not conceive that a coronet was so very tempting!

Lady Browne is quite recovered—unless she relapses from what we suffer at Twickenham Park from a lord N * * * *, an old seaman, who is come to Richmond on a visit to the duke of Montrose. I think the poor man must be out of his senses—at least he talks us out of ours. It is the most incessant and incoherent rhapsody that ever was heard. He sits by the card-table, and pours on Mrs. N * * * * all that ever happened in his voyages or his memory. He details the ship's allowance, and talks to her as if she were his first mate. Then in the mornings he carries his daughter to town to see St. Paul's, and the Tower, and Westminster Abbey; and at night disgorges all he has seen; till we don't know the ace of spades from queen Elizabeth's pocket pistol in the armoury. Mercy on us! and mercy on your lordship too! Why should you be stunned with that alarum? Have you had your earthquake, my lord? Many have had theirs. I assure you I have had mine. Above a week ago, when broad awake, the doors of the cabinet by my bedside rattled, without a breath of wind. I imagined somebody was walking on the leads, or had broken into the room under me. It was between four and five in the morning. I rang my bell. Before my servant could come, it happened again, and was exactly like the horizontal tremor I felt from the earthquake some years ago. As I had rung once, it is plain I was awake. I rang again, but heard nothing more. I am quite persuaded there was some commotion; nor is it surprising, that the dreadful eruptions of fire on the coasts of Italy and Sicily should have occasioned some alteration, that has extended faintly hither, and contributed to the heats and mists that have been so extraordinary. George Montagu said of our last earthquake, that it was so tame you might have stroked it. It is comfortable to live where one can reason on them without dreading them. What satisfaction should you

have in having erected such a monument of your taste, my lord, as Wentworth Castle, if you did not know but it might be overturned in a moment, and crush you? Sir William Hamilton is expected: he has been groping in all these devastations. Of all vocations I would not be a professor of earthquakes. I prefer studies that are *couleur de rose;* nor would ever think of calamities, if I can do nothing to relieve them. Yet this is a weakness of mind that I do not defend. They are more respectable, who can behold philosophically the great theatre of events—or rather this little theatre of ours! In some ampler sphere, they may look on the catastrophe of Messina as we do on kicking to pieces an ant-hill.

Bless me! what a farrago is my letter! It is like the extracts of books in a monthly magazine. I had no right to censure poor lord N****'s ramblings. Lady Strafford will think he has infected me. Good night, my dear lord and lady. Your ever devoted.

LETTER XXXVIII.

*The Hon. Horace Walpole to Mr. Pinkerton.**

March 17, 1785.

I AM much obliged to you, sir, for the many civil and kind expressions in your letter, and for the friendly information you give me. Partiality, I fear, dictated the former; but the last I can only ascribe to the goodness of your heart.

I have published nothing of any size but the pieces you mention, and one or two small tracts, now out of print and forgotten. The rest have been prefaces to some of my Strawberry editions, and to a few other publications, and some fugitive pieces, which I reprinted several years ago in a small volume, and which shall be at your service with the Catalogue of Noble Authors.

With regard to the bookseller who has taken the trouble to collect my writings, (amongst which I do not doubt but he will generously bestow on me many that I did not write, according to the laudable practice of such compilers,) and who also intends to write my life,—to which, as I never did any thing worth the notice of the public, he must likewise be a volunteer contributor,—it would be vain for me to endeavour to prevent such a design. Whoever has been so unadvised as to throw himself on the public, must pay such a tax in a pamphlet or a magazine when he dies; but happily the insects that prey on carrion are still more short-lived than the carcasses were, from which they draw temporary nutriment. Those momentary abortions live but a day, and are thrust aside like embryos. Literary characters, when not illustrious, are known only to a few literary men, and, amidst the world of books, few readers can come to my share. Printing, that secures existence (in libraries) to indifferent authors of any bulk, is like those cases of Egyptian mummies, which in catacombs preserve bodies of one knows not whom, and which are scribbled over with characters that nobody attempts to read, till nobody understands the language in which they were written.

I believe, therefore, it will be most wise to swim for a moment on the passing current, secure that it will soon hurry me into the ocean where all things are forgotten. To appoint a biographer is to bespeak a panegyric; and I doubt whether they who collect their works for the public, and, like me, are conscious of no intrinsic worth, do not beg mankind to accept of talents (whatever they were) in lieu of virtues. To antici-

* The author of an Essay on Medals, and the History of Scotland from the Accession of the House of Stuart to that of Mary, &c. &c.

pate spurious publications by a comprehensive and authentic one, is almost as great an evil. It is giving a body to scattered atoms; and such an act, in one's old age, is declaring a fondness for the indiscretions of youth, or for trifles of an age, which, though more mature, is only the less excusable. It is most true, sir, that, so far from being prejudiced in favour of my own writings, I am persuaded that, had I thought early as I think now, I should never have appeared as an author. Age, frequent illness, and pain, have given me many hours of reflection in the intervals of the latter, which, besides shewing me the inutility of all our little views, have suggested an observation that I love to encourage in myself, from the rationality of it. I have learnt and have practised the mortifying task of comparing myself with great authors, and that comparison has annihilated all the flattery that self-love could suggest. I know how trifling my own writings are, and how far below the standard that constitutes excellence; for the shades that distinguish the degrees of mediocrity, they are not worth discrimination; and he must be humble, or easily satisfied, who can be content to glimmer for a moment a little more than his brethren glow-worms. Mine therefore, you find, sir, is not humility, but pride. When young, I wished for fame; not examining whether I was capable of attaining it, nor considering in what light fame was desirable. There are two sorts of honest fame—that attendant on the truly great, and that better kind which is due to the good. I fear I did not aim at the latter, nor discovered that I could never compass the former. Having neglected the best road, and having, instead of the other, strolled into a narrow path that led to no goal worth seeking, I see the idleness of my journey, and hold it more graceful to abandon my wanderings to chance or oblivion, than to mark solicitude for trifles, which I think so myself.

I beg your pardon for talking so much about myself; but an answer was due to the unmerited attention you have paid to my writings. I turn with more pleasure to speak on yours. Forgive me if I shall blame you, whether you either abandon your intention,* or are too impatient to finish it. Your preface proves that you are capable of treating the subject ably; but allow me to repeat, that it is a kind of subject that ought not to be executed impetuously. A mere recapitulation of authenticated facts would be dry. A more enlarged plan would demand acquaintance with the characters of the actors, and with the *probable* sources of measures. The age is accustomed to details and anecdotes; and the age immediately preceding his own is less known to any man than the history of any other period. You are young enough, sir, to collect information on many particulars that will occur in your progress, from living actors, at least from their contemporaries; and, great as your ardour may be, you will find yourself delayed by the want of materials and by further necessary inquiries. As you have variety of talents, why should you not exercise them on works that will admit of more rapidity, and, at the same time, at leisure moments, commence, digest, and enrich your plan, by collecting new matter for it?

In one word, I have too much zeal for your credit, not to dissuade precipitation in a work of the kind you meditate. That I speak sincerely, and without flattery, you are sure, as accident, not design, made you acquainted with my admiration of your tract on medals. If I wish to delay your history, it must be that it may appear with more advantages; and I

* Of writing a History of the Reign of George II.

must speak disinterestedly, as my age will not allow me to hope to see it, if not finished soon. I should not forgive myself if I turned you from prosecution of your work; but as I am sure my writings can have given you no opinion of my having sound and deep judgment, pray follow your own, and allow no merit but that of sincerity and zeal to the sentiments of your obliged and obedient humble servant.

LETTER XXXIX.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 29, 1786.

SINCE I received the honour of your lordship's last, I have been at Park Place for a few days. Lord and lady Frederick Campbell and Mrs. Damer were there. We went on the Thames to see the new bridge at Henley, and Mrs. Damer's colossal masks. There is not a sight in the island more worthy of being visited. The bridge is as perfect as if bridges were natural productions, and as beautiful as if it had been built for Wentworth Castle; and the masks as if the Romans had left them here. We saw them in a fortunate moment; for the rest of the time was very cold and uncomfortable, and the evenings as chill as many we have had lately. In short, I am come to think that the beginning of an old ditty, which passes for a collection of blunders, was really an old English pastoral, it is so descriptive of our climate:—

> Three children sliding on the ice
> All on a summer's day——

I have been overwhelmed more than ever by visitants to my house. Yesterday I had count Oghinski, who was a pretender to the crown of Poland at the last election, and has been stripped of most of a vast estate. He had on a ring of the new king of Prussia, or I should have wished him joy on the death of one of the plunderers of his country.

It has long been my opinion, that the out-pensioners of Bedlam are so numerous, that the shortest and cheapest way would be to confine in Moorfields the few that remain in their senses, who would then be safe; and let the rest go at large. They are the out-pensioners who are for destroying poor dogs! The whole canine race never did half so much mischief as lord George Gordon; nor even worry hares, but when hallooed on by men. As it is a persecution of animals, I do not love hunting; and what old writers mention as a commendation makes me hate it the more,—its being an image of war. Mercy on us! that destruction of any species should be a sport or a merit! What cruel, unreflecting imps we are! Every body is unwilling to die, yet sacrifices the lives of others to momentary pastime, or to the still emptier vapour, fame! A hero or a sportsman, who wishes for longer life, is desirous of prolonging devastation. We shall be crammed, I suppose, with panegyrics and epitaphs on the king of Prussia. I am content that he can now have an epitaph. But, alas! the emperor will write one for him probably in blood! and, while he shuts up convents for the sake of population, will be stuffing hospitals with maimed soldiers, besides making thousands of widows! I have just been reading a new-published history of the colleges in Oxford, by Anthony Wood, and there found a feature in a character that always offended me, that of archbishop Chicheley, who prompted Henry V. to the invasion of France, to divert him from squeezing the overgrown clergy. When that priest meditated founding All Souls, and "consulted his friends (who seem to have been honest men)

what great matter of piety he had best perform to God in his old age, he was advised by them to build an hospital for the wounded and sick soldiers, that daily returned from the wars then had in France;"—I doubt his grace's friends thought as I do of his artifice:—"but," continues the historian, "*disliking those motions*, and valuing the welfare of the deceased more than the wounded and diseased, he resolved with himself to promote his design, which was to have masses said for the king, queen, and himself, &c. while living, and for their souls when dead." And that mummery the old foolish rogue thought more efficacious than ointments and medicines for the wretches he had made! And of the chaplains and clerks he instituted in that dormitory, one was to teach grammar, and another prick-song. How history makes one shudder and laugh by turns! But I fear I have wearied your lordship with my idle declamation, and you will repent having commanded me to send you more letters; and I can only plead that I am your (perhaps too) obedient humble servant.

LETTER XL.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to Lady Craven.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 11, 1788.

It is agreeable to your ladyship's usual goodness to honour me with another letter—and I may say to your equity too, after I had proved to monsieur Mercier, by the list of dates of my letters, that it was not mine but the post's fault, that you did not receive one that I had the honour of writing to you above a year ago. Not, madam, that I could wonder if you had the prudence to drop a correspondence with an old superannuated man, who, conscious of his decay, has had the decency of not troubling with his dotages, persons of not near your ladyship's youth and vivacity. I have long been of opinion, that few persons know *when* to die—I am not so English as to mean when to despatch themselves—no, but when to go out of the world. I have usually applied this opinion to those who have made a considerable figure, and consequently it was not adapted to myself. Yet even we ciphers ought not to fatigue the public scene when we are become lumber. Thus, being quite out of the question, I will explain my maxim, which is the more wholesome, the higher it is addressed. My opinion, then, is, that when any personage has shewn as much as is possible in his or her best walk (and, not to repeat both genders every minute, I will use the male as the common of the two), he should take up his Strulbrugism, and be heard of no more. Instances will be still more explanatory. Voltaire ought to have pretended to die after Alzire, Mahomet, and Semiramis, and not to have produced his wretched last pieces. Lord Chatham should have closed his political career with his immortal war. And how weak was Garrick, when he had quitted the stage, to limp after the tatters of fame, by writing and reading pitiful poems, and even by *sitting* to read plays which he had acted with such fire and energy? We have another example in Mr. Anstey; who, if he had a friend upon earth, would have been obliged to him for being knocked on the head the moment he had published the *first* edition of the Bath Guide; for even in the second he had exhausted his whole stock of inspiration, and has never written any thing tolerable since. When such unequal authors print their works together, one may apply in a new light the old hacked simile of

Mezentius, who tied together the living and the dead.

We have just received the works of an author, from whom I find I am to receive much less entertainment than I expected, because I shall have much less to read than I intended. His memoirs, I am told, are almost wholly military, which, therefore, I shall not read; and his poetry, I am sure, I shall not look at, because I should understand it. What I saw of it formerly convinced me, that he would not have been a poet, even if he had written in his own language; and, though I do not understand German, I am told it is a fine language; and I can easily believe, that any tongue (not excepting our old barbarous Saxon, which, a bit of an antiquary as I am, I abhor) is more harmonious than French. It was curious absurdity, therefore, to pitch on the most unpoetic language in Europe, the most barren, and the most clogged with difficulties. I have heard Russian and Polish sung, and both sounded musical; but to abandon one's own tongue, and not adopt Italian, that is even sweeter, and softer, and more copious than the Latin, was a want of taste that I should think could not be applauded even by a Frenchman born in Provence. But what a language is the French, which measures verses by feet that never are to be pronounced, which is the case wherever the mute *e* is found! What poverty of various sounds for rhyme, when, lest similar cadences should too often occur, their mechanic bards are obliged to marry masculine and feminine terminations as alternately as the black and white squares of a chess-board! Nay, will you believe me, madam?—yes, you will; for you may convince your own eyes,—that a scene of Zaire begins with three of the most nasal adverbs that ever snorted together in a breath. *Enfin, donc, deformais,* are the culprits in question. *Enfin donc,* need I tell your ladyship, that the author I alluded to at the beginning of this long tirade is the late king of Prussia.

I am conscious that I have taken a little liberty when I excommunicate a tongue in which your ladyship has condescended to write; but I only condemn it for verse and pieces of eloquence, of which I thought it alike incapable, till I read Rousseau of Geneva. It is a most sociable language, and charming for narrative and epistles. Yet, write as well as you will in it, you must be liable to express yourself better in the speech natural to you; and your own country has a right to understand all your works, and is jealous of their not being as perfect as you could make them. Is it not more creditable to be translated into a foreign language than into your own? and will it not vex you to hear the translation taken for the original, and to find vulgarisms that you could not have committed yourself? But I have done, and will release you, madam; only observing, that you flatter me with a vain hope when you tell me you shall return to England some time or other. Where will that time be for me?—and, when it arrives, shall not I be somewhere else?

I do not pretend to send your ladyship English news, nor to tell you of English literature. You must, before this time, have heard of the dismal state into which our chief personage is fallen! That consideration absorbs all others. The two houses are going to settle some intermediate succedaneum, and *the obvious one,* no doubt, will be fixed on.

This letter, I hope, will be more fortunate than my last. I should be very unhappy to seem again ungrateful, when I have the honour of being, with the greatest respect, madam, &c. &c.

LETTER XLI.

The Earl of Orford to Mrs. H. More.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 1, 1792.

My much-esteemed friend,

I HAVE not so long delayed answering your letter from the pitiful revenge of recollecting how long your pen is fetching breath before it replies to mine. Oh, no! you know I love to *heap coals of kindness* on your head, and to draw you into little sins, that you may forgive yourself, by knowing your time was employed on big virtues. On the contrary, you would be revenged; for here have you, according to *your* notions, inveigled me into the fracture of a commandment; for I am writing to you on a *Sunday*, being the first moment of leisure that I have had since I received your letter. It does not, indeed, clash with my religious ideas, as I hold paying one's debts as good a deed as praying and reading sermons for a whole day in every week, when it is impossible to fix the attention to one course of thinking for so many hours for fifty-two days in every year. Thus, you see, I can preach too. But seriously—and indeed I am little disposed to cheerfulness now—I am overwhelmed with troubles and with business—and business that I do not understand. Law, and the management of a ruined estate, are subjects ill suited to a head, that never studied any thing that in worldly language is called useful. The tranquillity of my remnant of life will be lost, or so perpetually interrupted, that I expect little comfort; not that I am already intending to grow rich, but the moment one is supposed so, there are so many alert to turn one to their own account, that I have more letters to write to satisfy, or rather to dissatisfy them, than about my own affairs, though the latter are all confusion. I have such missives, on agriculture, pretensions to livings, offers of taking care of my game, as I am incapable of it, self-recommendations of making my robes, and round hints of taking out my writ, that at least I may name a proxy, and give my dormant conscience to somebody or other! I trust you think better of my heart and understanding than to suppose that I have listened to any one of these new *friends*. Yet, though I have negatived all, I have been forced to answer some of them before you; and that will convince you how cruelly ill I have passed my time lately, besides having been made ill with vexation and fatigue. But I am tolerably well again.

For the other empty metamorphosis that has happened to the outward man,* you do me justice in concluding that it can do nothing but tease me; it is being called names in one's old age. I had rather be my lord mayor, for then I should keep the nickname but a year, and mine I may retain a little longer; not that at seventy-five I reckon on becoming my lord Methusalem.

Vainer, however, I believe I am already become; for I have wasted almost two pages about myself, and said not a tittle about your health, which I most cordially rejoice to hear you are recovering, and as fervently hope you will entirely recover. I have the highest opinion of the element of water as a constant beverage, having so deep a conviction of the goodness and wisdom of Providence, that I am persuaded, that when it indulged us in such a luxurious variety of eatables, and gave us but one drinkable, it intended that our sole liquid should be both wholesome and corrective. Your system, I know, is different. You hold that mutton

* His accession to his title. This is the last letter but one signed Horace Walpole; and that one follows it, being without date or other internal evidence of the time it was written.

and water were the only cock and hen that were designed for our nourishment; but I am apt to doubt whether draughts of water for six weeks are capable of restoring health, though some are strongly impregnated with mineral and other particles. Yet you have staggered me: the Bath water, by your account, is, like electricity, compounded of contradictory qualities; the one attracts and repels; the other turns a shilling yellow, and whitens your jaundice. I shall hope to see you (when is that to be?) without alloy.

I must finish, wishing you three hundred and thirteen days of happiness for the new year that is arrived this morning: the fifty-two that you hold in commendam, I have no doubt, will be rewarded as such good intentions deserve.

Adieu, my *too* good friend! My direction shall talk superciliously to the postman:* but do let me continue, unchangeably, your faithful and sincere, &c.

LETTER XLII.

The Earl of Orford to the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Strawberry Hill, June 13, 1793.

I THANK you much for all your information—some parts made me smile: yet, if what you heard of **** proves true, I rather think it deplorable! How can love of money, or the still vainer of all vanities, ambition of wearing a high but most insignificant office, which even poor lord ****** could execute, tempt a very old man, who loves his ease and his own way, to stoop to wait like a footman behind a chair, for hours, and in a court whence he had been cast ignominiously! I believe I have more pride than most men alive: I could be flattered by honours acquired by merit, or by some singular action of *eclat;* but for titles, ribands, offices of no business, which any body can fill, and must be given to many, I should just as soon be proud of being the top 'squire in a country village. It is only worse to have waded to distinction through dirt, like lord ****.

All this shifting of scenes may, as you say, be food to the *Fronde*—*Sed defendit numerus.* It is perfectly ridiculous to use any distinction of parties but the *ins* and the *outs.* Many years ago I thought that the wisest appellations for contending factions, ever assumed, were those in the Roman empire, who called themselves *the greens and the blues:* it was so easy, when they changed sides, to slide from one colour to the other—and then a blue might plead that he had never been *true blue,* but always a *greenish blue;* and *vice versâ.*

I allow that the steadiest party man may be staggered by novel and unforeseen circumstances. The outrageous proceedings of the French republicans have wounded the cause of liberty, and will, I fear, have shaken it for centuries; for Condorcet, and such fiends, are worse than the imperial and royal dividers of Poland. But I do not see why detestation of anarchy and assassination must immediately make one fall in love with garters and seals.

I am sitting by the fire, as I have done ever since I came hither; and, since I do not expect warm weather in June, I am wishing for rain, or I shall not have a mouthful of hay, nor a noseful of roses. Indeed, as I have seen several fields of hay cut, I wonder it has not brought rain, as usual. My creed is, that rain is good for hay, as I conclude every climate and its productions are suited to each other. Providence did

* He means franking his letter by his newly acquired title of earl of Orford.

not trouble itself about its being more expensive to us to make our hay over and over; it only took care it should not want water enough. Adieu.

LETTER XLIII.

The Earl of Orford to Wm. Roscoe, Esq.

Berkeley Square, April 4, 1795.

To judge of my satisfaction and gratitude, on receiving the very acceptable present of your book,* sir, you should have known my extreme impatience for it from the instant Mr. Edwards had kindly favoured me with the first chapters. You may consequently conceive the mortification I felt at not being able to thank you immediately, both for the volume and the obliging letter that accompanied it, by my right arm and hand being swelled, and rendered quite immoveable and useless, of which you will perceive the remains, if you can read these lines which I am forcing myself to write, not without pain, the first moment I have power to hold a pen; and it will cost me some time, I believe, before I can finish my whole letter, earnest as I am, sir, to give a loose to my gratitude.

If you ever had the pleasure of reading such a delightful book as your own, imagine, sir, what a comfort it must be to receive such an anodyne in the midst of a fit of the gout, that has already lasted above nine weeks, and which at first I thought might carry me to Lorenzo de Medici before he should come to me!

The complete volume has more than answered the expectations which the sample had raised. The Grecian simplicity of the style is preserved throughout; the same judicious candour reigns in every page; and, without allowing yourself that liberty of indulging your own bias towards good or against criminal characters, which over-rigid critics prohibit, your artful candour compels your readers to think with you, without seeming to take a part yourself. You have shewn, from his own virtues, abilities, and heroic spirit, why Lorenzo deserved to have Mr. Roscoe for his biographer. And since you have been so, sir, (for he was not completely known before, at least not out of Italy,) I shall be extremely mistaken if he is not henceforth allowed to be, in various lights, one of the most excellent and greatest men with whom we are well acquainted, especially if we reflect on the shortness of his life, and the narrow sphere in which he had to act. Perhaps I ought to blame my own ignorance, that I did not know Lorenzo as a beautiful poet: I confess I did not. Now I do, I own I admire some of his sonnets more than several—yes, even of Petrarch; for Lorenzo's are frequently more clear, less *alembiqués*, and not inharmonious, as Petrarch's often are, from being too crowded with words, for which room is made by numerous elisions, which prevent the softening alternacy of vowels and consonants. That thicket of words was occasioned by the embarrassing nature of the sonnet—a form of composition I do not love, and which is almost intolerable in any language but Italian, which furnishes such a profusion of rhymes. To our tongue the sonnet is mortal, and the parent of insipidity. The imitation in some degree of it was extremely noxious to a true poet, our Spenser; and he was the more injudicious by lengthening his stanza, in a language so barren of rhymes as ours, and in which several words, whose terminations are of similar sounds, are so rugged, uncouth,

* The Life of Lorenzo de Medici.

and unmusical. The consequence was, that many lines, which he forced into the service, to complete the quota of his stanza, are unmeaning, or silly, or tending to weaken the thought he would express.

Well, sir, but if you have led me to admire the compositions of Lorenzo, you have made me intimate with another poet, of whom I had never heard, nor had the least suspicion; and who, though writing in a less harmonious language than Italian, outshines an able master of that country, as may be estimated by the fairest of all comparisons, which is, when one of each nation versifies the same ideas and thoughts.

That novel poet, I boldly pronounce, is Mr. Roscoe. Several of his translations of Lorenzo are superior to the originals, and the verses more poetic; nor am I bribed to give this opinion by the present of your book, nor by any partiality, nor by the surprise of finding so pure a writer of history as able a poet. Some good judges, to whom I have shewn your translations, entirely agree with me.

I will name one most competent judge, Mr. Hoole, so admirable a poet himself, and such a critic in Italian, as he has proved by a translation of Ariosto.

That I am not flattering you, sir, I will demonstrate; for I am not satisfied with one essential line in your version of the most beautiful, I think, of all Lorenzo's stanzas. It is his description of jealousy, in page 268, equal, in my humble opinion, to Dryden's delineations of the passions, and the last line of which is—

*Mai dorme, ed ostinata a se sol crede.**

The thought to me is quite new, and your translation, I own, does not come up to it. Mr. Hoole and I hammered at it, but could not content ourselves. Perhaps, by altering your last couplet, you may enclose the whole sense, and make it equal to the preceding six.

I will not ask your pardon, sir, for taking so much liberty with you. You have displayed so much candour and so much modesty, and are so free from pretensions, that I am confident you will allow, that truth is the sole ingredient that ought to compose deserved incense; and if ever commendation was sincere, no praise ever flowed with purer veracity than all I have said in this letter does from the heart of, sir, your infinitely obliged humble servant.

* Never sleeps, and obstinately trusts himself alone.

LETTER XLIV.

The Earl of Orford to the Countess of * * * *.*

Jan. 13, 1797.

My dear madam,

You distress me infinitely by shewing my idle notes, which I cannot conceive can amuse any body. My old-fashioned breeding impels me, every now and then, to reply to the letters you honour me with writing; but, in truth, very unwillingly; for I seldom can have any thing particular to say. I scarce go out of my own house, and then only to two or three very private places, where I see nobody that really knows any thing—and what I learn comes from newspapers, that collect intelligence from coffee-houses—consequently, what I neither believe nor report. At home I see only a few charitable elders, except about fourscore nephews and nieces, of various ages, who are each brought to me once a year, to stare at me as the Methusalem of the family; and they can only speak of their own contemporaries, which interest me no more than if they talked of their dolls, or bats and balls.

Must not the result of all this, madam, make me a very entertaining correspondent?—and can such letters be worth shewing?—or can I have any spirit, when so old and reduced, to dictate? Oh, my good madam, dispense with me from such a task, and think how it must add to it to apprehend such letters being shewn. Pray send me no more such laurels, which I desire no more than their leaves when decked with a scrap of tinsel, and stuck on twelfth-cakes, that lie on the shopboards of pastry-cooks at Christmas. I shall be quite content with a sprig of rosemary thrown after me, when the parson of the parish commits my dust to dust.* Till then, pray, madam, accept the resignation of your ancient servant.

LETTER XLV.

Henry Kirke White to his brother Neville.

Nottingham, September, 1799.

Dear brother,

In consequence of your repeated solicitations, I now sit down to write to you, although I never received an answer to the last letter which I wrote, nearly six months ago; but as I never heard you mention it in any of my mother's letters, I am induced to think it has miscarried, or been mislaid in your office.

It is now nearly four months since I entered into Mr. Coldham's office, and it is with pleasure I can assure you, that I never yet found any thing disagreeable; but, on the contrary, every thing I do seems a pleasure to me, and for a very obvious reason;—it is a business which I like, a business which I chose before all others; and I have two good tempered, easy masters, but who will, nevertheless, see that their business is done in a neat and proper manner. The study of the law is well known to be a dry, difficult task, and requires a comprehensive, good understanding, and I hope you will allow me (without charging me with egotism) to have a tolerable one; and I trust, with perseverance, and a very large law library to refer to, I shall be able to accomplish the study of so much of the laws of England, and our system of jurisprudence, in less than five years, as to enable me to be a country attorney; and then, as I shall have two more years to serve, I hope I shall attain so much knowledge in all parts of the law, as to enable me, with a little study at the inns of court, to hold an argument, on the nice points in the law, with the best attorney in the kingdom. A man that understands the law is sure to have business; and in case I have no thoughts, in case, that is, that I do not aspire to hold the honourable place of a barrister, I shall feel sure of gaining a genteel livelihood at the business to which I am articled.

I attend at the office at eight in the morning, and leave at eight in the evening; then attend my Latin until nine; which, you may be sure, is pretty close confinement.

Mr. Coldham is clerk to the commercial commissioners, which has occasioned us a deal of extraordinary work. I worked all Sunday, and until twelve o'clock on Saturday night, when they were hurried to give in the certificates to the bank. We had also a very troublesome cause last assizes,—the corporation versus Gee,—which we (the attornies for the corporation) lost. It was really a very fatiguing day, (I mean the day on which it was tried.) I never got any thing to eat, from five in the afternoon the preceding day, until twelve the next night, when the trial ended.

* Lord Orford died in little more than six weeks after the date of this letter.

LETTER XLVI.

Henry Kirke White to his brother Neville.

Nottingham, 25th June, 1800.

Dear Neville,

* * * * *

You are inclined to flatter me, when you compare my application with yours; in truth, I am not half so assiduous as you, and I am conscious I waste a deal of time unwittingly. But, in reading, I am upon the continual search for improvement: I thirst after knowledge, and, though my disposition is naturally idle, I conquer it when reading an useful book. The plan which I pursued, in order to subdue my disinclination to dry books, was this—to begin *attentively* to peruse it, and continue thus one hour every day: the book insensibly, by this means, becomes pleasing to you; and, even when reading Blackstone's Commentaries, which are very dry, I lay down the book with regret.

With regard to the Monthly Preceptor, I certainly shall be agreeable to your taking it in, as my only objection was the extreme impatience which I feel to see whether my essays have been successful; but this may be obviated by your speedy perusal, and not neglecting to forward it. But you must have the goodness not to begin till August, as my bookseller cannot stop it this month.

* * * * * *

I had a ticket given me, to the boxes, on Monday night, for the benefit of Campbell, from Drury Lane, and there was such a riot as never was experienced here before. He is a democrat, and the soldiers planned a riot in conjunction with the *mob*. We heard the shouting of the rabble in the street before the *play* was over: the moment the curtain dropt, an officer went into the front box, and gave the word of command: immediately about sixty troopers started up, and six trumpeters in the pit played "God save the King." The noise was astonishing. The officers in the boxes then drew their swords; and, at another signal, the privates in the pit drew their bludgeons, which they had hitherto concealed, and attacked all, indiscriminately, that had not an uniform: the officers did the same with their swords, and the house was one continued scene of confusion: one pistol was fired, and the ladies were fainting in the lobby. The outer doors were shut, to keep out the mob, and the people jumped on the stage as a last resource. One of these noble officers, seeing one man stand in the pit with his hat on, jumped over the division, and cut him with his sword, which the man instantly wrenched from him, and broke, whilst the officer sneaked back in disgrace. They then formed a troop, and, having emptied the play-house, they scoured the streets with their swords, and returned home victorious. The players are, in consequence, dismissed; and we have informations in our office against the officers.

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LETTER XLVII.

Henry Kirke White to his brother Neville.

Nottingham, Michaelmas-day, 1800.

Dear Neville,

I CANNOT divine what, in an epistolary correspondence, can have such charms (with people who write only common-place occurrences) as to attach a man from his usual affairs, and make him waste time and paper on what cannot be of the least real benefit to his correspondent. Amongst relatives, certainly, there is always an incitement: we always feel an anxiety for their welfare. But I have no

friend so dear to me, as to cause me to take the trouble of reading his letters, if they only contained an account of his health, and the mere nothings of the day; indeed, such an one would be unworthy of friendship. What then is requisite to make one's correspondence valuable? I answer, *sound sense:* Nothing more is requisite: as to the style, one may very readily excuse its faults, if repaid by the sentiments. You have better natural abilities than many youth, but it is with regret I see that you will not give yourself the trouble of writing a good letter. There is hardly any species of composition (in my opinion), easier than the epistolary; but, my friend, you never found any art, however trivial, that did not require some application at first. For, if an artist, instead of endeavouring to surmount the difficulties which presented themselves, were to rest contented with mediocrity, how could he possibly ever arrive at excellence! Thus it is with you: instead of that indefatigable perseverance which, in other cases, is a leading trait in your character, I hear you say, "Ah, my poor brains were never formed for letter writing—I shall never write a good letter,"—or some such phrases; and thus, by despairing of ever arriving at excellence, you render yourself hardly tolerable. You may, perhaps, think this art beneath your notice, or unworthy of your pains: if so, you are assuredly mistaken; for there is hardly any thing which would contribute more to the advancement of a young man, or which is more engaging.

You read, I believe, a good deal: nothing could be more acceptable to me, or more improving to you, than making a part of your letters to consist of your sentiments, and opinion of the books you peruse: you have no idea how beneficial this would be to yourself; and that you are able to do it, I am certain. One of the greatest impediments to good writing is the thinking too much before you note down. This, I think, you are not entirely free from. I hope that, by always writing the first idea that presents itself, you will soon conquer it; my letters are always the rough first draft; of course there are many alterations; these you will excuse.

I have written most of my letters to you in so negligent a manner, that, if you would have the goodness to return all you have preserved *sealed*, I will peruse them, and all sentences worth preserving I will extract and return.

You observe, in your last, that your letters are read with contempt. Do you speak as you think?

You had better write again to Mr. ——. Between friends, the common forms of the world, in writing letter for letter, need not be observed: but never write three without receiving one in return, because in that case they must be thought unworthy of answer.

We have been so busy lately, I could not answer yours sooner.—Once a month suppose we write to each other. If you ever find that my correspondence is not worth the trouble of carrying on, inform me of it, and it shall cease.

* * * * *

P. S. If any expression in this be too harsh, excuse it,—I am not in an ill humour, recollect.

LETTER XLVIII.

Henry Kirke White to Mr. R. A.....

Nottingham, May 6th, 1804;

Dear Robert,

* * * * * *

You don't know how I long to hear how your declamation was received; and "all about it," as we say in these parts. I hope to see it,

when I see its author and pronouncer. Themistocles, no doubt, received due praise from you for his valour and *subtlety*, but I trust you poured down a torrent of eloquent indignation upon the ruling principles of his actions, and the motive of his conduct; while you exalted the mild and unassuming virtues of his more amiable rival. The object of Themistocles was the aggrandizement of himself; that of Aristides the welfare and prosperity of the state. The one endeavoured to swell the *glory* of his country; the other to promote its security, external and internal, foreign and domestic. While you estimated the services which Themistocles rendered to the state, in opposition to those of Aristides, you of course remembered, that the former had the largest scope for action, and that he influenced his countrymen to fall into all his plans, while they banished his competitor, not by his superior wisdom or goodness, but by those intrigues and factious artifices which Aristides would have disdained. Themistocles certainly did use *bad* means to a desirable end: and, if we may assume it as an axiom, that Providence will forward the designs of a good, sooner than those of a bad man, whatever inequality of abilities there may be between the two characters, it will follow that—had Athens remained under the guidance of Aristides, it would have been better for her. The difference between Themistocles and Aristides seems to me to be this: That the former was a wise and a *fortunate* man; and that the latter, though he had equal wisdom, had not equal good fortune. We may admire the heroic qualities and the crafty policy of the one, but to the temperate and disinterested patriotism, the good and virtuous dispositions of the other, we can alone give the meed of heart-felt *praise*.

I only mean by this, that we must not infer Themistocles to have been *the better* or *the greater* man, because he rendered more essential services to the state than Aristides, nor even that his system was the most judicious,—but only that, by decision of character, and by good fortune, his measures succeeded best.

* * * * * *

The rules of composition are, in my opinion, very few. If we have a mature acquaintance with our subject, there is little fear of our expressing it as we ought, provided we have had *some little* experience in writing. The first thing to be aimed at is perspicuity. *That* is the great point, which, once attained, will make all other obstacles smooth to us. In order to write perspicuously, we should have a *perfect* knowledge of the topic on which we are about to treat, in all its bearings and dependencies. We should think well, beforehand, what will be the clearest method of conveying the drift of our design. This is similar to what painters call the massing, or getting the effect of the more prominent lights and shades by broad dashes of the pencil. When our thesis is well arranged in our mind, and we have predisposed our arguments, reasonings, and illustrations, so as they shall all conduce to the object in view, in regular sequence and gradation, we may sit down and express our ideas in as clear a manner as we can, always using such words as are most suited to our purpose, and, when two modes of expression, equally luminous, present themselves, selecting that which is the most harmonious and elegant.

It sometimes happens that writers, in aiming at perspicuity, over-reach themselves, by employing too many words, and perplex the mind by a multiplicity of illustrations. This is a very fatal error. Circumlocution seldom conduces to plainness; and you may take it as a maxim, that,

when once an idea is *clearly expressed*, every additional stroke will only confuse the mind, and diminish the effect.

When you have once learned to express yourself with clearness and propriety, you will soon arrive at elegance. Every thing else, in fact, will follow as of course. But I warn you not to invert the order of things, and be paying your addresses to the graces, when you ought to be studying perspicuity. Young writers, in general, are too solicitous to round off their periods, and regulate the cadences of their style. Hence the feeble pleonasms, and idle repetitions, which deform their pages. If you would have your compositions vigorous and masculine in their tone, let every WORD TELL; and when you detect yourself polishing off a sentence with expletives, regard yourself in exactly the same predicament with a poet, who should eke out the measure of his verses with "titum, titum, tee, sir."

So much for style——

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LETTER XLIX.

Henry Kirke White to Robert Southey, the Editor of his Works.

Nottingham, July 9th, 1804.

* * * * * *

I CAN *now* inform you, that I have reason to believe my way through college is clear before me. From what source I know not, but through the hands of Mr. Simeon, I am provided with 30*l.* per annum: and, while things go on so prosperously as they do now, I can command 20*l.* or 30*l.* more from my friends, and this, in all probability, until I take my degree. The friends, to whom I allude, are my *mother* and *brother*.

My mother has, for these five years past, kept a boarding school in Nottingham; and, so long as her school continues in its present state, she can supply me with 15*l.* or 20*l.* per annum, without inconvenience; but should she die, (and her health is, I fear, but infirm,) that resource will altogether fail. Still, I think, my prospect is so good as to preclude any anxiety on my part; and perhaps my income will be more than adequate to my wants, as I shall be a Sizar of St. John's, where the college emoluments are more than commonly large.

In this situation of my affairs, you will perhaps agree with me in thinking that a subscription for a volume of poems will not be necessary; and, certainly, that measure is one which will be better avoided, if it may be. I have lately looked over what poems I have by me in manuscript, and find them more numerous than I expected; but many of them would perhaps be styled *mopish* and *mawkish*, and even *misanthropic*, in the language of the world; though, from the latter sentiment, I am sure I can say, no one is more opposite than I am. These poems, therefore, will never see the light, as from a teacher of that word which gives all strength to the feeble: more fortitude and Christian philosophy may with justice be expected than they display. The remainder of my verses would not possess any great interest: mere description is often mere nonsense: and I have acquired a strange habit, whenever I do point out a train of moral sentiment from the contemplation of a picture, to give it a gloomy and querulous cast, when there is nothing in the occasion but what ought to inspire joy and gratitude. I have one poem,* however, of some length, which I shall preserve; and I have another of considerable magnitude in design, but of which only a part is written, which I am fairly at a loss whether to commit to the flames, or, at some future opportunity, to finish. The

* TIME is probably the poem alluded to.

subject is the death of Christ. I have no friend, whose opinion is at all to be relied on, to whom I could submit it; and perhaps, after all, it may be absolutely worthless.

With regard to that part of my provision, which is derived from my unknown friend, it is of course conditional; and as it is not a provision for a *poet*, but for a *candidate for orders*, I believe it is expected, and, indeed, it has been hinted as a thing advisable, that I should barter the muses for mathematics, and abstain from writing verses, at least until I take my degree. If I find that all my time will be requisite, in order to *prepare* for the important office I am destined to fill, I shall certainly do my duty, however severely it may cost me: but if I find I may lawfully and conscientiously relax myself, at intervals, with those delightful reveries which have hitherto formed the chief leisure of my life, I shall, without scruple, indulge myself in them.

I know the pursuit of truth is a much more important business than the exercise of the imagination; and, amid all the quaintness and stiff method of the mathematicians, I can even discover a source of chaste and exalted pleasure. To their severe but salutary discipline, I must now "subdue the vivid shapings of my youth;" and, though I shall cast many a fond, lingering look to Fancy's more alluring paths, yet I shall be repaid by the anticipation of days, when I may enjoy the sweet satisfaction of being useful, in no ordinary degree, to my fellow mortals.

* * * * * *

LETTER L.

Henry Kirke White to Mr. B. Maddock.

Winteringham, August 3d, 1804.

My dear Ben,

I AM all anxiety to learn the issue of your proposal to your father. Surely it will proceed; surely a plan, laid out with such fair prospects of happiness to you, as well as me, will not be frustrated. Write to me the moment you have any information on the subject.

I think we shall be happy together at Cambridge; and in the ardent pursuit of Christian knowledge, and *Christian* virtue, we shall be doubly united. We were before friends; now, I hope, likely to be still more emphatically so. But I must not anticipate.

I left Nottingham without seeing my brother Neville, who arrived there two days after me. This is a circumstance which I much regret; but I hope he will come this way, when he goes, according to his intention, to a watering place. Neville has been a good brother to me, and there are not many things which would give me more pleasure than, after so long a separation, to see him again. I dare not hope, that I shall meet you and him together, in October, at Nottingham.

My days flow on here in an even tenor. They are, indeed, studious days, for my studies seem to multiply on my hands, and I am so much occupied with them, that I am becoming a mere book-worm, running over the rules of Greek versification in my walks, instead of expatiating on the beauties of the surrounding scenery. Winteringham is, indeed, now a delightful place: the trees are in full verdure, the crops are brouzing the fields, and my former walks are become dry under foot, which I have never known them to be before. The opening vista, from our churchyard over the Humber, to the hills and receding vales of Yorkshire, assumes a thousand new aspects. I sometimes watch it at evening, when the sun is just gilding the summits of the hills, and the lowlands are beginning to take a browner hue. The showers partially falling in the

distance, while all is serene above me; the swelling sail rapidly falling down the river; and, not least of all, the villages, woods, and villas on the opposite bank, sometimes render this scene quite enchanting to me; and it is no contemptible relaxation, after a man has been puzzling his brains over the intricacies of Greek choruses all the day, to come out and unbend his mind with careless thought and negligent fancies, while he refreshes his body with the fresh air of the country.

I wish you to have a taste of these pleasures with me; and, if ever I should live to be blest with a quiet parsonage, and that great object of my ambition, a garden, I have no doubt but we shall be, for some short intervals at least, two quiet, contented bodies. These will be our relaxations; our *business* will be of a nobler kind. Let us vigilantly fortify ourselves against the exigencies of the serious appointment we are, with God's blessing, to fulfil; and, if we go into the church prepared to do our duty, there is every reasonable prospect that our labours will be blessed, and that we shall be blessed in them. As your habits generally have been averse to what is called *close* application, it will be too much for your strength, as well as unadvisable in other points of view, to study very intensely; but regularly you may, and must read; and, depend upon it, a man will work more wonders by stated and constant application, than by unnatural and forced endeavours.

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LETTER LI.

Henry Kirke White to Mr. Maddock.

Winteringham, 1st March, 1805.

My dear Ben,

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I HOPE and trust that you have at length arrived at that happy temperament of disposition, that, although you have much cause of sadness within, you are yet willing to be amused with the variegated scenes around you, and to join, when occasions present themselves, in innocent mirth. Thus, in the course of your peregrinations, occurrences must continually arise, which, to a mind willing to make the best of every thing, will afford amusement of the chastest kind. Men and manners are a never-failing source of wonder and surprise, as they present themselves in their various phases. We may very innocently laugh at the brogue of a Somerset peasant; and I should think that person both cynical and surly, who could pass by a group of laughing children, without participating in their delight, and joining in their laugh. It is a truth most undeniable, and most melancholy, that there is too much in human life which extorts tears and groans, rather than smiles. This, however, is equally certain, that our giving way to unremitting sadness on these accounts, so far from ameliorating the condition of mortality, only adds to the aggregate of human misery, and throws a gloom over those moments, when a ray of light is permitted to visit the dark valley of life, and the heart ought to be making the best of its fleeting happiness. Landscape, too, ought to be a source of delight to you; fine buildings, objects of nature, and a thousand things which it would be tedious to name. I should call the man, who could survey such things as these without being affected with pleasure, either a very weak-minded and foolish person, or one of no mind at all. To be always sad, and always pondering on internal griefs, is what I call utter selfishness: I would not give two-pence for a being who is locked up in his suffering, and whose heart cannot respond to the exhilarating cry of nature, or rejoice because he sees

others rejoice. The loud and unanimous chirping of the birds, on a fine sunny morning, pleases me, because I see they are happy: and I should be very selfish, did I not participate in their seeming joy. Do not, however, suppose that I mean to exclude a man's own sorrows from his thoughts, since that is an impossibility, and, were it possible, would be prejudicial to the human heart. I only mean, that the whole mind is not to be incessantly engrossed with its cares, but, with cheerful elasticity, to bend itself occasionally to circumstances, and give way, without hesitation, to pleasing emotions. To be pleased with little is one of the greatest blessings.

Sadness is itself sometimes infinitely more pleasing than joy; but this sadness must be of the expansive and generous kind, rather referring to mankind at large, than the individual; and this is a feeling not incompatible with cheerfulness and a contented spirit. There is difficulty, however, in setting bounds to a pensive disposition; I have felt it, and I have felt that I am not always adequate to the task. I sailed from Hull to Barton the day before yesterday, on a rough and windy day, in a vessel filled with a marching regiment of soldiers: the band played finely, and I was enjoying the many pleasing emotions which the water, sky, winds, and musical instruments excited, when my thoughts were suddenly called away to more melancholy subjects. A girl, genteelly dressed, and with a countenance which, for its loveliness, a painter might have copied for Hebe, with a loud laugh, seized me by the great coat, and asked me to lend it her: she was one of those unhappy creatures, who depend on the brutal and licentious for a bitter livelihood, and was now following in the train of one of the officers. I was greatly affected by her appearance and situation, and more so by that of another female, who was with her, and who, with less beauty, had a wild sorrowfulness in her face, which shewed she knew her situation. This incident, apparently trifling, induced a train of reflections, which occupied me fully during a walk of six or seven miles to our parsonage. At first I wished that I had fortune to erect an asylum for all the miserable and destitute: and there was a soldier's wife, with a wan and haggard face, and a little infant in her arms, whom I would also have wished to place in it. I then grew out of humour with the world, because it was so unfeeling and so miserable, and because there was no cure for its miseries; and I wished for a lodging in the wilderness, where I might hear no more of wrongs, affliction, or vice. But, after all my speculations, I found there was a reason for these things in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that, to those who sought it, there was also a cure. So I banished my vain meditations, and, knowing that God's providence is better able to direct the affairs of men than our wisdom, I leave them in his hands.

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LETTER LII.

Henry Kirke White to his Mother.

Winteringham, 5th Feb. 1805.

Dear mother,

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THE spectacles for my father are, I hope, such as will enable him to read with ease; *although they are not set in silver.* If they hurt him through stiffness, I think the better way will be to wear them with the *two end joints shut to,* and with a piece of ribbon to go round the back of the head, &c. The Romaine's Sermons, and the cheap tracts, are books which I thought might be useful.

You may think I am not yet privileged to make presents, since they will, in the end, come out of your pocket; but I am not in want of cash at present, and have reason to believe, from my own calculations, I shall not have occasion to call upon you for what I know you can so ill spare. I was quite vexed afterwards, that I did not send you all the volumes of the Cheap Repository, as the others, which are the *general tracts*, and such as are more entertaining, would have been well adapted to your library. When I next go to Hull, I propose buying the remaining volumes, and, when I next have occasion to send a parcel, you will receive them. The volume you have now got contains all the *Sunday* reading tracts, and on that account I sent it separately. As I have many things to remind me of my sister Smith, I thought (though we neither of us need such mementos) that she would not be averse to receive the sermons of the great and good, though, in some respects, singular, Romaine, at my hands, as what old-fashioned people would call *a token of a brother's love*, but what, in more courtly phrase, is denominated a *memento of affection.*

LETTER LIII.

Henry Kirke White to his brother Neville.

Winteringham, April, 1805.

Dear Neville,

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You wrote me a long sheet this last time, and I have every reason to be satisfied with it; yet I sometimes wish I could make you write closer and smaller. Since your mind must necessarily be now much taken up with other things, I dare not press my former inquiries on subjects of reading. When your leisure season comes, I shall be happy to hear from you on these topics.

It is a remark of an ancient philosophical poet, (Horace,) that every man thinks his neighbour's condition happier than his own; and, indeed, common experience shews, that we are too apt to entertain romantic notions of absent, and to think meanly of present things; to extol what we have had no experience of, and to be discontented with what we possess. The man of business sighs for the sweets of leisure: the person who, with a taste for reading, has few opportunities for it, thinks that man's life the sum of bliss, who has nothing to do but to study. Yet it often happens, that the condition of the envier is happier than that of the envied. You have read Dr. Johnson's tale of the poor tallow-chandler, who, after sighing for the quiet of country life, at length scraped money enough to retire, but found his long-sought-for leisure so insupportable, that he made a voluntary offer to his successor to come up to town every Friday, and melt tallow for him gratis. It would be so with half the men of business, who sigh so earnestly for the sweets of retirement; and you may receive it as one of the maturest observations I have been able to make on human life, that there is no condition so happy as that of him who leads a life of full and constant employment. His amusements have a zest, which men of pleasure would gladly undergo all his drudgery to experience; and the regular succession of business, provided his situation be not too anxious, drives away from his brain those harassing speculations, which are continually assaulting the man of leisure, and the man of reading. The studious man, though his pleasures are of the most refined species, finds cares and disturbing thoughts in study. To think much and deeply will soon make a man sad. His thoughts, ever on the

wing, often carry him where he shudders to be even in imagination. He is like a man in sleep—sometimes his dreams are pleasing, but at others horror itself takes possession of his imagination; and this inequality of mind is almost inseparable from much meditation and mental exercise. From this cause it often happens, that lettered and philosophical men are peevish in their tempers, and austere in their manners. The inference I would draw from these remarks is generally this, that, although every man carries about him the seeds of happiness or misery in his own bosom, yet it is a truth not liable to many exceptions, that men are more equally free from anxiety and care, in proportion as they recede from the more refined and mental, to the grosser and bodily employments and modes of life, but that the happiest condition is placed in the middle, between the extremes of both. Thus, a person with a moderate love of reading, and few opportunities of indulging it, would be inclined to envy one in my situation, because such a one has nothing to do but to read; but I could tell him, that, though my studious pleasures are more comprehensive than his, they are not more exquisite, and that an occasional banquet gives more delight than a continual feast. Reading should be dearer to you than to me, because I always read, and you but seldom.

Almond and I took a small boat on Monday, and set out for Hull, a distance of thirteen miles, as some compute it, though others make it less. We went very merrily, with a good pair of oars, until we came within four miles of Hull, when, owing to some hard working, we were quite exhausted; but, as the tide was nearly down, and the shore soft, we could not get to any villages on the banks. At length we made Hull, and just arrived in time to be grounded in the middle of the harbour, without any possible means of getting ashore till the flux or flood. As we were half famished, I determined to wade ashore for provisions, and had the satisfaction of getting above the knees in mud almost every step I made. When I got ashore, I recollected I had given Almond all my cash. This was a terrible dilemma. To return back was too laborious, and I expected the tide flowing every minute. At last I determined to go to the inn where we usually dine when we go to Hull, and try how much credit I possessed there, and I happily found no difficulty in procuring refreshments, which I carried off in triumph to the boat. Here new difficulties occurred; for the tide had flowed-in considerably during my absence, although not sufficiently to move the boat; so that my wade was much worse back than it had been before. On our return, a most placid and calm day was converted into a cloudy one, and we had a brisk gale in our teeth. Knowing we were quite safe, we struck across from Hull to Barton; and, when we were off Hazel Whelps, a place which is always rough, we had some tremendous swells, which we weathered admirably, and (bating our getting on the wrong side of a bank, owing to the deceitful appearance of the coast) we had a prosperous voyage home, having rowed twenty-six miles in less than five hours.

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LETTER LIV.

Henry Kirke White to his Mother.

Winteringham, 12th April, 1805.

My dear mother,

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I HAVE constructed a planetarium, or *orrery*, of a very simple kind, which cannot fail to give even chil-

dren an idea of the order and course of the heavenly bodies. I shall write a few plain and simple lectures upon it, with lessons to be got off by heart by the children; so that you will be able, without any difficulty, to teach them the rudiments of astronomy. The machine, simple as it may seem, is such, that you cannot fail to understand the planetary system by it; and, were it not that I cannot afford the additional expense, I could make it much more complete and interesting. You must not expect any thing striking in the instrument itself, as it only consists of an index plate, with rods and balls. It will explain the situation of the planets, their courses, the motion of the earth and moon, the causes of the *seasons*, the different lengths of day and night, the reason of eclipses, transits, &c. When you have seen it, and read the explanatory lectures, you will be able to judge of its plainness; and, if you find you understand it, you may teach geography scholars its use. Should it fail in other points of view, it will be useful to Maria and Catharine.

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Remember to keep up the plan of family worship on Sundays, with strictness until I come, and it will probably pave the way for still further improvements, which I may perhaps have an opportunity of making while I stay with you. Let Maria and Catharine be more particularly taught to regard Sunday as a day set apart from all worldly occupations. Let them have every thing prepared for the Sabbath on the preceding day; and be carefully warned, on that day in particular, to avoid paying too great an attention to dress. I know how important habits like these will be to their future happiness, even in this world, and I therefore press this with earnestness.

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LETTER LV.

Henry Kirke White to his Mother.

London, December 24th, 1805.

My dear mother,

You will, no doubt, have been surprised at not having heard from me for so long a time, and you will be no less so to find, that I am writing this at my aunt's in this far-famed city. I have been so much taken up with our college examinations of late, that I could not find time to write, even to you; and I am now come to town, in order to give myself every relaxation and amusement I can; for I had read so much at Cambridge, that my health was rather affected, and I was advised to give myself the respite of a week or a fortnight, in order to recover strength. I arrived in town on Saturday night, and should have written yesterday, in order to remove any uneasiness you might feel on my account, but there is no post on Sunday.

I have now to communicate some agreeable intelligence to you. Last week being the close of the Michaelmas term, and our college examination, our tutor, who is a very great man, sent for me, and told me he was sorry to hear I had been ill: he understood I was low spirited, and wished to know whether I frightened myself about college expenses. I told him, that they did contribute some little to harass me, because I was as yet uncertain what the bills of my first year would amount to. His answer was to this purpose: "Mr. White, I beg you will not trouble yourself on this subject: your emoluments will be very great, very great indeed, and I will take care your expenses are not very burthensome. Leave that to me." He advised me to go to my friends, and amuse myself with a total cessation from reading. After our college examination (which lasted six days) was over, he

sent for me again, and repeated what he had said before about the expenses of the college; and he added, that, if I went on as I had begun, and made myself a good scholar, I might rely on being provided for by the college; for, if *the county should be full*, and they could not elect me a fellow, they would recommend me to another college, where they would be glad to receive a clever man from their hands; or, at all events, they could *always* get a young man a situation as a private tutor in a nobleman's family, or could put him in some handsome way of preferment. "We make it a rule, (he said,) of providing for a clever man, whose fortune is small; and you may therefore rest assured, Mr. White, that, after you have taken your degree, you will be provided with a genteel competency *by the college*." He begged I would be under no apprehensions on these accounts: he shook hands with me very affectionately, and wished me a speedy recovery. These attentions, from a man like the tutor of St. John's, are very marked; and Mr. Catton is well known for doing more than he says. I am sure, after these assurances from a principal of so respectable a society as St. John's, I have nothing more to fear; and I hope you will never repine on my account again. According to every appearance, my lot in life is certain.

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LETTER LVI.

Henry Kirke White to Mr. B. Maddock.

St. John's, Cambridge, 22d Sept. 1806.

My dear friend,

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You charge me with an accession of gallantry of late. I plead guilty. I really began to think of marriage, (very prematurely you'll say;) but, if I experience any repetition of *the fit*, I shall drop the idea of it for ever. It would be folly and cruelty to involve another in all the horrors of such a calamity.

I thank you for your kind exhortations to a complete surrender of my heart to God, which are contained in your letter. In this respect I have betrayed the most deplorable weakness and indecision of character. I know what the truth is, and I love it; but I still go on giving myself half to God, and half to the world, as if I expected to enjoy the comforts of religion along with the vanities of life. If, for a short time, I keep up a closer communion with God, and feel my whole bosom bursting with sorrow and tenderness as I approach the footstool of my Saviour, I soon relapse into indifference, worldly-mindedness, and sin; my devotions become listless and perfunctory; I doat on the world, its toys, and its corruptions, and am mad enough to be willing to sacrifice the happiness of eternity to the deceitful pleasures of the passing moment. My heart is, indeed, a lamentable sink of loathsome corruption and hypocrisy. In consistency with my professed opinions, I am often obliged to talk on subjects, of which I know but little in experience, and to rank myself with those who have felt, what I only approve from my head, and, perhaps, esteem from my heart. I often start with horror and disgust from myself, when I consider how deeply I have imperceptibly gone into this species of simulation. Yet I think my love for the Gospel, and its professors, is sincere: only I am insincere in suffering persons to entertain an high opinion of me as a child of God, when, indeed, I am an alien from him. On looking over some private memorandums, which were written at various times in the course of the two last years, I beheld, with inexpressible anguish, that my progress

has, if any thing, been retrograde. I am still as dark, still as cold, still as ignorant, still as fond of the world, and have still fewer desires after holiness. I am very, very dissatisfied with myself, and yet I am not prompted to earnest prayer. I have been so often earnest, and always have fallen away, that I go to God without hope, without faith. Yet I am not *totally* without hope; I know God will have my whole heart; and I know, when I give him *that*, I shall experience the light of his countenance with a permanency. I pray that he would assist my weakness, and grant me some portion of his grace, in order that I may overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, to which I have long, very long, been a willing, though an unhappy slave.—Do you pray earnestly with me, and for me, in these respects. I know the prayers of the faithful avail much; and, when you consider with what great temptations I am surrounded, and how very little strength I have wherewith to resist them, you will feel with me the necessity of earnest supplication, and fervent intercession, lest I should be lost, and cast away for ever.

I shall gladly receive your spiritual advice and directions. I have gone on *too* long in coldness and unconcern. Who knows whether, if I neglect the present hour, the day of salvation may not be gone by for ever!!

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LETTER LVII.

Henry Kirke White to Mr. John Charlesworth.

St. John's, 22d Sept. 1806.

My dear Charlesworth,

THANK you for taking the blame of our neglected correspondence on your own shoulders. I thought it rested elsewhere. Thrice have I begun to write to you; once in Latin, and twice in English; and each time have the Fates opposed themselves to the completion of my design. But, however, *pax sit rebus*, we are naturally disposed to forgive, because we are, as far as intention goes, mutually offenders.

I thank you for your invitation to Clapham, which came at a fortunate juncture, since I had just settled with my tutor that I should pay a visit to my brother in London this week. I shall of course see you; and shall be happy to spend a few days with you at Clapham, and to rhapsodize on your common. It gives me pleasure to hear you are settled, and I give you many hearty good wishes for practice and prosperity. I hope you will soon find that a wife is a very necessary article of enjoyment in a domesticated state; for how, indeed, should it be otherwise? A man cannot cook his dinner while he is employed in earning it. Housekeepers are complete *helluones rei familiaris*, and not only pick your pockets, but abuse you into the bargain: while a wife, on the contrary, both cooks your dinner, and enlivens it with her society; receives you after the toils of the day with cheerfulness and smiles, and is not only the faithful guardian of your treasury, but the soother of your cares, and the alleviator of you calamities. Now, am I not very poetical? But, on such a subject, who would not be poetical? A wife!—a domestic fireside!—the cheerful assiduities of love and tenderness! It would inspire a Dutch burgomaster! And if, with all this in your grasp, you shall still choose the *pulsare terram pede libero*, still avoid the *irrupta copula*, still deem it a matter of light regard to be an object of affection and fondness to an amiable and sensible woman,—why then you deserve to be a fellow of a college all

your days; to be kicked about in your last illness by a saucy and careless bed-maker; and, lastly, to be put in the ground in your college chapel, followed only by the man who is to be your successor. Why, man, I dare no more *dream* that I shall ever have it in my power to have a wife, than that I shall be Archbishop of Canterbury, and Primate of all England. A suit of rooms in a still and quiet corner of old St. John's, which was once occupied by a crazy monk, or by one of the translators of the Bible, in the days of good King James, must form the boundary of my ambition. I must be content to inhabit walls which never echoed with a female voice, to be buried in glooms which were never cheered with a female smile. It is said, indeed, that women were sometimes permitted to visit St. John's, when it was a monastery of White-Friars, in order to be present at particular religious ceremonies; but the good monks were careful to sprinkle holy water wherever their profane footsteps had carried contagion and pollution.

It is well that you are free from the restrictions of monastic austerity, and that, while I sleep under the shadow of towers and lofty walls, and the safeguard of a vigilant porter, you are permitted to inhabit your own cottage, under your own guardianship, and to listen to the sweet accents of domestic affection.

Yes, my very Platonic, or rather Stoical friend, I must see you safely bound in the matrimonial noose, and then, like a confirmed bachelor, ten years hence, I shall have the satisfaction of pretending to laugh at, while, in my heart, I envy you.—So much for rhapsody. I am coming to London for relaxation's sake, and shall take it pretty freely; that is, I shall seek after fine sights—stare at fine people—be cheerful with the gay—foolish with the simple—and leave as little room to suspect as possible, that I am (any thing of) a philosopher and mathematician. I shall probably talk a little Greek, but it will be by stealth, in order to excite no suspicion.

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I shall be in town on Friday or Saturday. I am in a very idle mood, and have written you a very idle letter, for which I entreat your pardon, and I am, dear C——, very sincerely, yours, H. K. WHITE.

LETTER LVIII.

Lord Byron to the Hon. Mrs. Byron.

Gibraltar, Aug. 11th, 1809.

Dear mother,

I HAVE been so much occupied since my departure from England, that, till I could address you at length, I have forborne writing altogether. As I have now passed through Portugal, and a considerable part of Spain, and have leisure at this place, I shall endeavour to give you a short detail of my movements. We sailed from Falmouth on the 2d of July, reached Lisbon after a very favourable passage of four days and a half, and took up our abode in that city. It has often been described, without being worthy of description; for, except the view from the Tagus, which is beautiful, and some fine churches and convents, it contains little but filthy streets, and more filthy inhabitants. To make amends for this, the village of Cintra, about fifteen miles from the capital, is, perhaps, in every respect, the most delightful in Europe. It contains beauties of every description, natural and artificial. Palaces and gardens rising in the midst of rocks, cataracts, and precipices; convents on stupendous heights; a distant view of the sea and the Tagus; and, besides, (though that is a secondary consideration,) is

remarkable as the scene of Sir H. D.'s convention. It unites in itself all the wildness of the western highlands, with the verdure of the south of France. Near this place, about ten miles to the right, is the palace of Mafra, the boast of Portugal, as it might be of any country, in point of magnificence without elegance. There is a convent annexed. The monks, who possess large revenues, are courteous enough, and understand Latin, so that we had a long conversation. They have a large library, and asked me if the *English* had *any books* in their country. I sent my baggage and part of the servants' by sea to Gibraltar, and travelled on horseback from Aldea Galheda (the first stage from Lisbon, which is only accessible by water) to Seville, (one of the most famous cities in Spain,) where the government called the Junta is now held. The distance to Seville is nearly four hundred miles, and to Cadiz almost ninety miles further, towards the coast. I had orders from the government, and every possible accommodation on the road, as an English nobleman, in an English uniform, is a very respectable personage in Spain at present. The horses are remarkably good, and the roads (I assure you upon my honour, for you will hardly believe it,) very far superior to the best British roads, without the smallest toll or turnpike. You will suppose this when I rode post to Seville in four days, through this parching country, in the midst of summer, without fatigue or annoyance. Seville is a beautiful town: though the streets are narrow, they are clean. We lodged in the house of two Spanish unmarried ladies, who possess *six* houses in Seville, and gave me a curious specimen of Spanish manners. They are women of character, and the eldest a fine woman, the youngest pretty, but not so good a figure as Donna Josepha. The freedom of manner which is general here astonished me not a little; and, in the course of further observation, I find that reserve is not the characteristic of the Spanish belles, who are, in general, very handsome, with large black eyes, and very fine forms. The eldest honoured your *unworthy* son with very particular attention, embracing him with great tenderness at parting, (I was there but three days,) after cutting off a lock of his hair, and presenting him with one of her own, about three feet in length, which I send, and beg you will retain till my return. Her last words were, "Adios tu hermoso! me gusta mucho."—"Adieu, you pretty fellow! you please me much." She offered a share of her apartment, which my *virtue* induced me to decline: she laughed, and said I had some English "amante" (lover), and added, that she was going to be married to an officer in the Spanish army. I left Seville, and rode on to Cadiz, through a beautiful country. At *Xeres*, where the sherry we drink is made, I met a great merchant, a Mr. Gordon, of Scotland, who was extremely polite, and favoured me with the inspection of his vaults and cellars; so that I quaffed at the fountain-head. Cadiz, sweet Cadiz, is the most delightful town I ever beheld, very different from our English cities in every respect, except cleanliness, (and it is as clean as London,) but still beautiful, and full of the finest women in Spain, the Cadiz belles being the Lancashire witches of their land. Just as I was introduced, and began to like the grandees, I was forced to leave it for this cursed place; but before I return to England I will visit it again. The night before I left it, I sat in the box at the opera with admiral Cordova's family: he is the commander whom lord St. Vincent defeated in 1797, and has an aged wife and a fine daughter, Senorita Cordova. The girl

is very pretty in the Spanish style, in my opinion by no means inferior to the English in charms, and certainly superior in fascination. Long, black hair, dark, languishing eyes, *clear* olive complexions, and forms more graceful in motion than can be conceived by an Englishman used to the drowsy, listless air of his countrywomen, added to the most becoming dress, and, at the same time, the most decent in the world, render a Spanish beauty irresistible. I beg leave to observe, that intrigue here is the business of life. When a woman marries she throws off all restraint; but I believe their conduct is chaste enough before. If you make a proposal, which in England would bring a box on the ear from the meekest of virgins, to a Spanish girl, she thanks you for the honour you intend her, and replies, "Wait till I am married, and I shall be too happy." This is literally and strictly true. Miss C. and her little brother understood a little French, and, after regretting my ignorance of the Spanish, she proposed to become my preceptress in that language. I could only reply by a low bow, and express my regret that I quitted Cadiz too soon to permit me to make the progress, which would doubtless attend my studies under so charming a directress. I was standing at the back of the box, which resembles our opera boxes, (the theatre is large and finely decorated, the music admirable,) in the manner in which Englishmen generally adopt for fear of incommoding the ladies in front, when this fair Spaniard dispossessed an old woman, (an aunt or a duenna,) of her chair, and commanded me to be seated next herself, at a tolerable distance from her mamma. At the close of the performance I withdrew, and was lounging with a party of men in the passage, when, *en passant*, the lady turned round and called me, and I had the honour of attending her to the admiral's mansion. I have an invitation on my return to Cadiz, which I shall accept, if I pass through the country on my return from Asia. I have met sir John Carr, knight errant, at Seville and Cadiz. He is a pleasant man. I like the Spaniards much. You have heard of the battle near Madrid, and in England they will call it a victory. A pretty victory! Two hundred officers, and five thousand men killed, all English, and the French in as great force as ever. I should have joined the army, but we have no time to lose before we get up the Mediterranean and Archipelago. I am going over to Africa to-morrow: it is only six miles from this fortress. My next stage is Cagliari in Sardinia, where I shall be presented to his majesty. I have a most superb uniform as a court dress, indispensable in travelling.

August 13th.

I have not been to Africa; the wind is contrary; but I dined yesterday at Algesiras, with Lady Westmoreland, where I met General Castanos, the celebrated Spanish leader in the late and present war. To-day I dine with him. He has offered me letters to Tetuan in Barbary, for the principal Moors; and I am to have the house for a few days of one of the great men, which was intended for lady W., whose health will not permit her to cross the Straits.

August 15th.

I could not dine with Castanos yesterday, but this afternoon I had that honour. He is pleasant, and, for aught I know to the contrary, clever. I cannot go to Barbary. The Malta packet sails to-morrow, and myself in it. Admiral Purvis, with whom I dined at Cadiz, gave me a passage in a frigate to Gibraltar, but

we have no ship of war destined for Malta at present. The packets sail fast, and have good accommodations. You shall hear from me on our route.

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LETTER LIX.

Lord Byron to the Hon. Mrs. Byron.

Prevesa, Nov. 12th, 1809.

My dear mother,

I HAVE now been some time in Turkey: this place is on the coast, but I have traversed the interior of the province of Albania, on a visit to the pacha. I left Malta in the Spider, a brig of war, on the 21st of September, and arrived in eight days at Prevesa. I thence have been about 150 miles, as far as Tepaleen, his highness's country palace, where I staid three days. The name of the pacha is *Ali*, and he is considered a man of the first abilities; he governs the whole of Albania, (the ancient Illyricum,) Epirus, and part of Macedonia. His son, Velly Pacha, to whom he has given me letters, governs the Morea, and he has great influence in Egypt; in short, he is one of the most powerful men in the Ottoman empire. When I reached Yanina, the capital, after a journey of three days over the mountains, through a country of the most picturesque beauty, I found that Ali Pacha was with his army in Illyricum, besieging Ibrahim Pacha in the castle of Berat. He had heard that an Englishman of rank was in his dominions, and had left orders in Yanina, with the commandant, to provide a house, and supply me with every kind of necessary *gratis;* and, though I have been allowed to make presents to the slaves, &c., I have not been permitted to pay for a single article of household consumption. I rode out on the vizier's horses, and saw the palaces of himself and grandsons: they are splendid, but too much ornamented with silk and gold. I then went over the mountains through Zitza, a village with a Greek monastery, (where I slept on my return) in the most beautiful situation, (always excepting Cintra, in Portugal,) I ever beheld. In nine days I reached Tepaleen. Our journey was much prolonged by the torrents that had fallen from the mountains, and intersected the roads. I shall never forget the singular scene on entering Tepaleen at five in the afternoon, as the sun was going down: it brought to my mind (with some change of *dress* however,) Scott's description of Branksome Castle in his *Lay*, and the feudal system. The Albanians in their dresses (the most magnificent in the world, consisting of a long *white kilt*, gold-worked cloak, crimson velvet gold-laced jacket and waistcoat, silver mounted pistols and daggers,) the Tartars with their high caps, the Turks in their vast pelisses and turbans, the soldiers and black slaves with the horses, the former in groups in an immense large open gallery in front of the palace, the latter placed in a kind of cloister below it, two hundred steeds ready caparisoned to move in a moment, couriers entering or passing out with despatches, the kettle drums beating, boys calling the hour from the minaret of the mosque, altogether, with the singular appearance of the building itself, formed a new and delightful spectacle to a stranger. I was conducted to a very handsome apartment, and my health inquired after by the vizier's secretary, "a la mode Turque." The next day I was introduced to Ali Pacha. I was dressed in a full suit of staff uniform, with a very magnificent sabre, &c. The vizier received me in a large room paved with marble; a fountain was playing in the centre; the apartment was surrounded by scarlet ottomans. He received me standing, a wonder-

ful compliment from a Mussulman, and made me sit down on his right hand. I have a Greek interpreter for general use, but a physician of Ali's, named Temlario, who understands Latin, acted for me on this occasion. His first question was, why, at so early an age, I left my country—(the Turks have no idea of travelling for amusement.) He then said, the English minister, Captain Leake, had told him I was of a great family, and desired his respects to my mother; which I now, in the name of Ali Pacha, present to you. He said he was certain I was a man of birth, because I had small ears, curling hair, and little, white hands, and expressed himself pleased with my appearance and garb. He told me to consider him as a father whilst I was in Turkey, and said he looked on me as his son. Indeed, he treated me like a child, sending me almonds and sugared sherbet, fruit and sweetmeats, twenty times a day. He begged me to visit him often, and at night, when he was at leisure. I then, after coffee and pipes, retired for the first time. I saw him thrice afterwards. It is singular, that the Turks, who have no hereditary dignities, and few great families, except the sultans', pay so much respect to birth; for I found my pedigree more regarded than my title.

His highness is sixty years old, very fat, and not tall, but with a fine face, light blue eyes, and a white beard. His manner is very kind, and, at the same time, he possesses that dignity, which I find universal among the Turks. He has the appearance of any thing but his real character; for he is a remorseless tyrant, guilty of the most horrible cruelties, very brave, and so good a general, that they call him the Mahometan Buonaparte. Napoleon has twice offered to make him king of Epirus; but he prefers the English interest, and abhors the French, as he himself told me. He is of so much consequence, that he is much courted by both; the Albanians being the most warlike subjects of the Sultan, though Ali is only nominally dependent on the Porte. He has been a mighty warrior; but is as barbarous as he is successful, roasting rebels, &c. &c. Buonaparte sent him a snuff-box, with his picture; he said the snuff-box was very well, but the picture he could excuse, as he neither liked it nor the original. His ideas of judging of a man's birth from ears, hands, &c. were curious enough. To me he was, indeed, a father, giving me letters, guards, and every possible accommodation. Our next conversations were of war and travelling, politics and England. He called my Albanian soldier, who attends me, and told him to protect me at all hazard. His name is Viscillie, and, like all the Albanians, he is brave, rigidly honest, and faithful; but they are cruel, though not treacherous; and have several vices, but no meannesses. They are, perhaps, the most beautiful race, in point of countenance, in the world; their women are sometimes handsome also, but they are treated like slaves, *beaten*, and, in short, complete beasts of burthen; they plough, dig, and sow. I found them carrying wood, and actually repairing the highways. The men are all soldiers, and war and the chase their sole occupation. The women are the labourers, which, after all, is no great hardship in so delightful a climate. Yesterday, the 11th of November, I bathed in the sea; to-day it is so hot that I am writing in a shady room of the English consul's, with three doors wide open, no fire, or even *fireplace* in the house; except for culinary purposes. To-day I saw the remains of the town of Actium, near which Antony lost the world, in a small bay, where two frigates could hardly manœuvre; a broken wall is

the sole remnant. On another part of the gulf stand the ruins of Nicopolis, built by Augustus in honour of his victory. Last night I was at a Greek marriage; but this, and a thousand things more, I have neither time nor *space* to describe. I am going to-morrow, with a guard of fifty men, to Patras in the Morea, and thence to Athens, where I shall winter. Two days ago, I was nearly lost in a Turkish ship of war, owing to the ignorance of the captain and crew, though the storm was not violent. Fletcher yelled after his wife, the Greeks called on all the saints, the Mussulmans on Alla, the captain burst into tears, and ran below deck, telling us to call on God; the sails were split, the main yard shivered, the wind blowing fresh, the night setting in, and all our chance was to make Corfu, which is in possession of the French, or (as Fletcher pathetically termed it) "a watery grave." I did what I could to console Fletcher; but, finding him incorrigible, wrapped myself up in my Albanian capote (an immense cloak) and lay down on deck to wait the worst. I have learnt to philosophize in my travels, and, if I had not, complaint was useless. Luckily the wind abated, and only drove us on the coast of Suli, on the main land, where we landed, and proceeded, by the help of the natives, to Previsa again; but I shall not trust Turkish sailors in future, though the pacha had ordered one of his own galliots to take me to Patras. I am, therefore, going as far as Missolonghi by land, and there have only to cross a small gulf to get to Patras. Fletcher's next epistle will be full of marvels: we were one night lost for nine hours in the mountains in a thunder-storm, and since nearly wrecked. In both cases Fletcher was sorely bewildered, from apprehensions of famine and banditti in the first, and drowning in the second instance. His eyes were a little hurt by the lightning, or crying, (I don't know which,) but are now recovered. When you write, address to me at Mr. Strané's, English consul, Patras, Morea.

I could tell you I know not how many incidents, that I think would amuse you, but they crowd on my mind as much as they would swell my paper; and I can neither arrange them in the one, nor put them down in the other, except in the greatest confusion. I like the Albanians much: they are not all Turks: some tribes are Christians; but their religion makes little difference in their manner or conduct: they are esteemed the best troops in the Turkish service. I lived on my route, two days at once, and three days again, in a barrack at Salora, and never found soldiers so tolerable, though I have been in the garrisons of Gibraltar and Malta, and seen Spanish, French, Sicilian, and British troops in abundance. I have had nothing stolen; and was always welcome to their provision and milk. Not a week ago an Albanian chief (every village has its chief, who is called primate), after helping us out of the Turkish galley in her distress, feeding us, and lodging my suite, consisting of Fletcher, a Greek, two Athenians, a Greek priest, and my companion Mr. Hobhouse, refused any compensation but a written paper stating that I was well received; and when I pressed him to accept a few sequins, "No," he replied, "I wish you to love me, not to pay me." These are his words. It is astonishing how far money goes in this country. While I was in the capital I had nothing to pay, by the vizier's order; but since, though I have generally had sixteen horses, and generally six or seven men, the expense has not been *half* as much as staying only three weeks at Malta, though sir A. Ball, the governor, gave me a house for nothing, and I had only

one servant. By the by, I expect H * * to remit regularly; for I am not about to stay in this province for ever. Let him write to me at Mr. Strané's, English consul, Patras. The fact is, the fertility of the plains is wonderful, and specie is scarce, which makes this remarkable cheapness. I am going to Athens to study modern Greek, which differs much from the ancient, though radically similar. I have no desire to return to England, nor shall I, unless compelled by absolute want, and H * * 's neglect; but I shall not enter into Asia for a year or two, as I have much to see in Greece, and I may perhaps cross into Africa, at least the Egyptian part. Fletcher, like all Englishmen, is very much dissatisfied, though a little reconciled to the Turks by a present of eighty piastres from the vizier, which, if you consider every thing, and the value of specie here, is nearly worth ten guineas English. He has suffered nothing but from cold, heat, and vermin, which those who lie in cottages, and cross mountains in a cold country, must undergo, and of which I have equally partaken with himself; but he is not valiant, and is afraid of robbers and tempests. I have no one to be remembered to in England, and wish to hear nothing from it, but that you are well, and a letter or two on business from H * *, whom you may tell to write. I will write when I can, and beg you to believe me your affectionate son,

BYRON.

P. S. I have some very "magnifique" Albanian dresses, the only expensive article in this country. They cost 50 guineas each, and have so much gold, they would cost in England two hundred. I have been introduced to Hussim Bey and Mahmout Pacha, both little boys, grandchildren of Ali, at Yanina. They are totally unlike our lads, have painted complexions, like rouged dowagers, large black eyes, and features perfectly regular. They are the prettiest little animals I ever saw, and are broken into the court ceremonies already. The Turkish salute is a slight inclination of the head, with the hand on the breast. Intimates always kiss. Mahmout is ten years old, and hopes to see me again. We are friends without understanding each other, like many other folks, though from a different cause. He has given me a letter to his father in the Morea, to whom I have also letters from Ali Pacha.

LETTER LX.

Lord Byron to the Hon. Mrs. Byron.

Constantinople, June 28th, 1810.

My dear mother,

I REGRET to perceive, by your last letter, that several of mine have not arrived, particularly a very long one, written in November last, from Albania, when I was on a visit to the pacha of that province. Fletcher has also written to his spouse perpetually. Mr. Hobhouse, who will forward or deliver this, and is on his return to England, can inform you of our different movements; but I am very uncertain as to my own return. He will probably be down to Nott's some time or other; but Fletcher, whom I send back as an incumbrance, (English servants are sad travellers,) will supply his place in the interim, and describe our travels, which have been tolerably extensive. I have written twice, briefly, from this capital, from Smyrna, from Athens, and other parts of Greece; from Albania, the pacha of which province desired his respects to my mother, and said he was sure I was a man of high birth, because I had small ears, curling hair, and white hands!!! He was very kind to me, begged

me to consider him as a father, and gave me a guard of forty soldiers through the forests of Acarnania. But of this and other circumstances I have written to you at large, and yet hope you will receive my letters.

I remember Mahmout Pacha, the grandson of Ali Pacha, at Yanina, (a little fellow of ten years of age, with large black eyes, which our ladies would purchase at any price, and those regular features, which distinguish the Turks,) asked me how I came to travel so young, without any body to take care of me. This question was put by the little man with all the gravity of threescore. I cannot now write copiously; I have only time to tell you, that I have passed many a fatiguing, and never a tedious, moment; and that all I am afraid of is, that I shall contract a gipsy-like, wandering disposition, which will make home tiresome to me: this, I am told, is very common with men in the habit of peregrination, and, indeed, I feel it so. On the third of May I swam from *Sestos* to *Abydos*. You know the story of *Leander*, but I had no *Hero* to receive me at landing. I also passed a fortnight in the Troad: the tombs of Achilles and Æsyetes, still exist in large barrows similar to those you have, doubtless, seen in the north. The other day I was at Belgrade (a village in these environs), to see the house built on the same site as lady Mary Wortley's. By the by, her ladyship, as far as I can judge, has lied, but not half so much as any other woman would have done in the same situation. I have been in all the principal mosques by the virtue of a firman: this is a favour rarely permitted to infidels, but the ambassador's departure obtained it for us. I have been up the Bosphorus into the Black Sea, round the walls of the city, and, indeed, I know more of it, by sight, than I do of London.

I hope to amuse you some winter's evening with the details, but at present you must excuse me; I am not able to write long letters in June. I return to spend my summer in Greece. I shall not proceed further into Asia, as I have visited Smyrna, Ephesus, and the Troad. I write often, but you must not be alarmed when you do not receive my letters; consider we have no regular post further than Malta, where I beg you will in future send your letters, and not to this city. Fletcher is a poor creature, and requires comforts that I can dispense with. He is very sick of his travels, but you must not believe his account of the country; he sighs for ale, and idleness, and a wife, and the devil knows what besides. I have not been disappointed or disgusted. I have lived with the highest and the lowest. I have been, for days, in a pacha's palace, and have passed many a night in a cow-house, and I find the people inoffensive and kind. I have also passed some time with the principal Greeks in the Morea and Livadia, and, though inferior to the Turks, they are better than the Spaniards, who, in their turn, excel the Portuguese. Of Constantinople you will find many descriptions in different travels; but lady Wortley errs strangely when she says "St. Paul's would cut a strange figure by St. Sophia's." I have been in both, surveyed them, inside and out, attentively. St. Sophia's is undoubtedly the most interesting from its immense antiquity, and the circumstance of all the Greek emperors, from Justinian, having been crowned there, and several murdered at the altar, besides the Turkish sultans who attend it regularly. But it is inferior in beauty and size to some of the mosques, particularly "Soleyman, &c." and not to be mentioned in the same page with St. P.'s, (I speak like a *cockney*.) However, I prefer the Gothic cathedral of Seville,

to St. P.'s, St. Sophia's, and any religious building I have ever seen. The walls of the seraglio are like the walls of Newstead Gardens, only higher, and much in the same *order;* but the ride by the walls of the city on the land side is beautiful. Imagine four miles of immense triple battlements, covered with ivy, surmounted with 218 towers, and on the other side of the road Turkish burying grounds (the loveliest spots on earth) full of enormous cypresses.

I have seen the ruins of Athens, of Ephesus, and Delphi; I have traversed great part of Turkey, and many other parts of Europe, and some of Asia; but I never beheld a work of nature or art, which yielded an impression like the prospect on each side from the Seven Towers to the end of Golden Horn. Now for England. You have not received my friend Hobhouse's volume of poesy: it has been published several months; you ought to read it. I am glad to hear of the progress of E. Bards, &c. Of course, you observed I have made great additions to the new edition. Have you received my picture from Sanders, Vigo-lane, London? It was finished, and paid for, long before I left England: pray send for it. You seem to be a mighty reader of magazines: where do you pick up all this intelligence, quotations, &c. &c.? Though I was happy to obtain my seat without the assistance of lord C., I had no measures to keep with a man who declined interfering as my relation on that occasion, and I have done with him, though I regret distressing Mrs. Leigh, poor thing! I hope she is happy. It is my opinion that Mr. B * * ought to marry Miss R * *. Our first duty is not to do evil; but, alas! that is impossible; our next is to repair it, if in our power. The girl is his equal: if she were his inferior, a sum of money, and provision for the child, would be some, though a poor compensation: as it is, he should marry her. I will have no gay deceivers on my estate, and I shall not allow my tenants a privilege I do not permit myself, *that* of debauching each other's daughters. God knows, I have been guilty of many excesses, but, as I have laid down a resolution to reform, and lately kept it, I expect this Lothario to follow the example, and begin by restoring this girl to society, or, by the beard of my father! he shall hear of it. Pray take some notice of Robert, who will miss his master: poor boy, he was very unwilling to return. I trust you are well and happy. It will be a pleasure to hear from you. Believe me, yours very sincerely, BYRON.

LETTER LXI.

Lord Byron to R. C. Dallas, Esq.

Newstead, August 21st, 1811.

My dear sir,

YOUR letter gives me credit for more acute feelings than I possess; for, though I feel tolerably miserable, yet I am at the same time subject to a kind of hysterical merriment, or rather laughter without merriment, which I can neither account for nor conquer, and yet I do not feel relieved by it; but an indifferent person would think me in excellent spirits. "We must forget these things," and have recourse to our old selfish comforts, or rather comfortable selfishness. I do not think I shall return to London immediately, and shall therefore accept freely what is offered courteously, your mediation between me and Murray. I don't think my name will answer the purpose, and you must be aware that my plaguy Satire will bring the North and South Grub-streets down upon the "Pilgrimage;"—but, nevertheless, if Murray makes a point of it,

and you coincide with him, I will do it daringly; so let it be entitled, "by the Author of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." My remarks on the Romaic, &c. once intended to accompany the "Hints from Horace," shall go along with the other, as being indeed more appropriate; also the smaller poems now in my possession, with a few selected from those published in H**'s Miscellany. I have found, amongst my poor mother's papers, all my letters from the east, and one, in particular, of some length, from Albania. From this, if necessary, I can work up a note or two on that subject. As I kept no journal, the letters written on the spot are the best. But of this anon, when we have definitively arranged. Has Murray shown the work to any one? He may; but I will have no traps for applause. Of course there are little things I would wish you to alter, and perhaps the two stanzas of a buffooning cast on London's Sunday are as well left out. I much wish to avoid identifying Childe Harold's character with mine, and that, in sooth, is my second objection to my name appearing in the title-page. When you have made arrangements as to time, size, type, &c. favour me with a reply. I am giving you a universe of trouble, which thanks cannot atone for. I made a kind of prose apology for my skepticism, at the head of the MS., which, on recollection, is so much more like an attack than a defence, that haply it might better be omitted. Perpend, pronounce. After all, I fear Murray will be in a scrape with the orthodox; but I cannot help it, though I wish him well through it. As for me, "I have supped full of criticism," and I don't think that the "most dismal treatise" will stir and rouse my "fell of hair" till "Birnam wood do come to Dunsinane."

I shall continue to write at intervals, and hope you will pay me in kind. How does Pratt get on, or rather get off, Joe Blackett's posthumous stock? You killed that poor man amongst you, in spite of your Ionian friend and myself, who would have saved him from Pratt, poetry, present poverty, and posthumous oblivion. Cruel patronage! to ruin a man at his calling; but then he is a divine subject for subscription and biography; and Pratt, who makes the most of his dedications, has inscribed the volume to no less than five families of distinction.

I am sorry you don't like Harry White: with a great deal of cant, which in him was sincere (indeed it killed him as you killed Joe Blackett), certes there is poesy and genius. I don't say this on account of my simile and rhymes; but surely he was beyond all the Bloomfields and Blacketts, and their collateral cobblers, whom Lofft and Pratt have or may kidnap from their calling into the service of the trade. You must excuse my flippancy, for I am writing I know not what, to escape from myself.—Hobhouse is gone to Ireland: Mr. D * * has been here on his way to Harrowgate. You did not know M * *: he was a man of the most astonishing powers, as he sufficiently proved at Cambridge, by carrying off more prizes and fellowships, against the ablest candidates, than any other graduate on record; but a most decided atheist, indeed noxiously so, for he proclaimed his principles in all societies. I knew him well, and feel a loss not easily to be supplied to myself—to Hobhouse, never. Let me hear from you, and believe me always yours, BYRON.

LETTER LXII.

Lord Byron to R. C. Dallas, Esq.

Newstead Abbey, Sept. 7th, 1811.

My dear sir,

As Gifford has been ever my "Magnus Apollo," any approbation,

such as you mention, would, of course, be more welcome than "all Bokara's vaunted gold, than all the gems of Samarkand." But I am sorry the MS. was shown to him in such a manner, and had written to Murray to say as much, before I was aware that it was too late.

Your objection to the expression "central line," I can only meet by saying that, before Childe Harold left England, it was his full intention to traverse Persia, and return by India, which he could not have done without passing the equinoctial.

The other errors you mention I must correct in the progress through the press. I feel honoured by the wish of such men that the poem should be continued; but, to do that, I must return to Greece and Asia; I must have a warm sun and a blue sky. I cannot describe scenes so dear to me by a sea-coal fire. I had projected an additional canto when I was in the Troad and Constantinople, and if I saw them again it would go on; but, under existing circumstances and *sensations*, I have neither harp, "heart nor voice," to proceed. I feel that *you are all right* as to the metaphysical part, but I also feel that I am sincere, and that, if I am only to write "*ad captandum vulgus*," I might as well edite a magazine at once, or spin canzonettas for Vauxhall.

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My work must make its way as well as it can. I know I have every thing against me,—angry poets and prejudices; but if the poem is a *poem*, it will surmount these obstacles, and if *not*, it deserves its fate. Your friend's Ode I have read: it is no great compliment to pronounce it far superior to S *'s on the same subject, or to the merits of the new chancellor. It is evidently the production of a man of taste, and a poet, though I should not be willing to say it was fully equal to what might be expected from the author of "*Horæ Ionicæ*." I thank you for it, and that is more than I would do for any other ode of the present day.

I am very sensible of your good wishes, and, indeed, I have need of them. My whole life has been at variance with propriety, not to say decency; my circumstances are become involved; my friends are dead or estranged; and my existence a dreary void. In M * * I have lost my "guide, philosopher, and friend;" in Wingfield a friend only, but one whom I could have wished to have preceded in his long journey.

M * * was indeed an extraordinary man: it has not entered into the heart of a stranger to conceive such a man: there was the stamp of immortality in all he said or did: and now what is he? When we see such men pass away and be no more —men who seem created to display what the Creator *could make* his creatures—gathered into corruption, before the maturity of minds that might have been the pride of posterity, what are we to conclude? For my own part, I am bewildered. To me he was much, to Hobhouse every thing. My poor Hobhouse doted on M * *. For me, I did not love quite so much as I honoured him. I was, indeed, so sensible of his infinite superiority, that, though I did not envy, I stood in awe of it. He, Hobhouse, D * *, and myself, formed a coterie of our own at Cambridge and elsewhere. D * * is a wit and man of the world, and feels as much as such a character can do, but not as Hobhouse has been affected. D * *, who is not a scribbler, has always beaten us all in the war of words, and by his colloquial powers at once delighted and kept us in order. H. and myself always had the worst of it with the other two; and even M

yielded to the dashing vivacity of S * D * *. But I am talking to you of men, or boys, as if you cared about such beings.

I expect mine agent down on the 14th to proceed to Lancashire, where, I hear from all quarters, I have a very valuable property in coals, &c. I then intend to accept an invitation to Cambridge in October, and shall, perhaps, run up to town. I have four invitations, to Wales, Dorset, Cambridge, and Chester; but I must be a man of business. I am quite alone, as these long letters sadly testify. I perceive, by referring to your letter, that the Ode is from the author; make my thanks acceptable to him. His muse is worthy a nobler theme. You will write, as usual, I hope. I wish you a good evening, and am yours ever, BYRON.

LETTER LXIII.

Lord Byron to R. C. Dallas, Esq.

Newstead Abbey, Sept. 23d, 1811.

My dear sir,

Lisboa is the Portuguese word; consequently the very best. Ulissipont is pedantic; and, as I have *Hellas* and *Eros* not long before, there would be something like an affectation of Greek terms, which I wish to avoid, since I shall have a perilous quantity of *modern* Greek in my notes, as specimens of the tongue; therefore Lisboa may keep its place. You are right about the "Hints;" they must not precede the "Romaunt;" but Cawthorn will be savage if they don't; however, keep *them* back and *him* in *good humour*, if we can, but do not let him publish.

I have adopted, I believe, most of your suggestions; but "Lisboa" will be an exception to prove the rule. I have sent a quantity of notes, and shall continue; but pray let them be copied; no devil can read my hand. By the by, I do not mean to exchange the 9th verse of the "Good Night." I have no reason to suppose my dog better than his brother brutes, mankind; and *Argus* we know to be a fable. The "Cosmopolite" was an acquisition abroad. I do not believe it is to be found in England. It is an amusing little volume, and full of French flippancy. I read, though I do not speak, the language.

I *will* be angry with Murray. It was a book-selling, back-shop, Paternoster-row, paltry proceeding; and, if the experiment had turned out as it deserved, I would have raised all Fleet-street, and borrowed the giant's staff from St. Dunstan's church to immolate the betrayer of trust. I have written to him as he never was written to before by an author, I'll be sworn, and I hope you will amplify my wrath, till it has an effect upon him. You tell me always you have much to write: write it: but let us drop metaphysics: there we shall never agree. I am dull and drowsy, as usual, doing *nothing*, and even *that nothing* a fatigue. Adieu! Believe me, yours unfeignedly,

BYRON.

LETTER LXIV.

Lord Byron to R. C. Dallas, Esq.

Newstead Abbey, Sept. 26, 1811.

My dear sir,

IN a stanza towards the end of canto first there is, in the concluding line,

"Some bitter bubbles up, and e'en on roses *stings.*"

I have altered it as follows:—

"Full from the heart of joy's delicious springs
Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings."

If you will point out the stanzas on Cintra which you wish recast, I

will send you mine answer. Be good enough to address your letters here, and they will either be forwarded or saved till my return. My agent comes to-morrow, and we shall set out immediately.

The press must not proceed, of course, without my seeing the proofs, as I have much to do. Pray do you think any alterations should be made in the stanzas on VATHEK? I should be sorry to make any improper allusion, as I merely wish to adduce an example of wasted wealth, and the reflection which arose in surveying the most desolate mansion in the most beautiful spot I ever beheld.

Pray keep Cawthorn back: he was not to begin till November, and even that will be two months too soon. I am so sorry my hand is unintelligible; but I can neither deny your accusation, nor remove the cause of it. It is a sad scrawl, certes. A perilous quantity of annotation hath been sent; I think almost *enough*, with the specimens of Romaic I mean to annex.

I will have nothing to say to your metaphysics, and allegories of rocks and beaches: we shall all go to the bottom together; so "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow, &c." I am as comfortable in my creed as others, inasmuch as it is better to sleep than to be awake.

I have heard nothing of Murray; I hope he is ashamed of himself. He sent me a vastly complimentary epistle, with a request to alter the two, and finish another canto. I sent him as civil an answer as if I had been engaged to translate by the sheet, declined altering any thing in sentiment, but offered to tag rhymes, and mend them as long as he liked.

I will write from Rochdale when I arrive, if my affairs allow me; but I shall be so busy and savage all the time, with the whole set, that my letters will, perhaps, be as pettish as myself. If so, lay the blame on coal and coal-heavers. Very probably I may proceed to town by way of Newstead on my return from Lancs. I mean to be at Cambridge in November; so that, at all events, we shall be nearer. I will not apologize for the trouble I have given, and do give you, though I ought to do so; but I have worn out my politest periods, and can only say, that I am very much obliged to you. Believe me, yours always, BYRON.

LETTER LXV.

Lord Byron to R. C. Dallas, Esq.

Newstead Abbey, October 11th, 1811.

Dear sir,

I HAVE returned from Lancs, and ascertained that my property there may be made very valuable; but various circumstances very much circumscribe my exertions at present. I shall be in town on business in the beginning of November, and perhaps at Cambridge before the end of this month: but of my movements you shall be regularly apprized. Your objections I have in part done away by alterations, which I hope will suffice; and I have sent two or three additional stanzas for both "*Fyttes.*" I have been again shocked with a *death*, and have lost one very dear to me in happier times; but "I have almost forgot the taste of grief," and "supped full of horrors" till I have become callous; nor have I a tear left for an event which, five years ago, would have bowed down my head to the earth. It seems as though I were to experience, in my youth, the greatest misery of age. My friends fall around me, and I shall be left a lonely tree before I am withered. Other men can always take refuge in their families: I have no resource but my own reflections, and they present no prospect, here or hereafter, except the selfish satisfaction of

surviving my betters. I am indeed very wretched, and you will excuse my saying so, as you know I am not apt to cant of sensibility. Instead of tiring yourself with *my* concerns, I should be glad to hear *your* plans of retirement. I suppose you would not like to be wholly shut out of society. Now I know a large village, or small town, about twelve miles off, where your family would have the advantage of very genteel society, without the hazard of being annoyed by mercantile affluence; where *you* would meet with men of information and independence; and where I have friends, to whom I should be proud to introduce you. There are, besides, a coffee-room, assemblies, &c. &c. which bring people together. My mother had a house there some years, and I am well acquainted with the economy of Southwell, the name of this little commonwealth. Lastly, you will not be very remote from me; and, though I am the very worst companion for young people in the world, this objection would not apply to *you*, whom I could see frequently. Your expenses, too, would be such as best suit your inclinations; more or less, as you thought proper; but very little would be requisite to enable you to enter into all the gaieties of a country life. You could be as quiet or bustling as you liked, and certainly as well situated as on the lakes of Cumberland, unless you have a particular wish to be *picturesque*.

Pray, is your Ionian friend in town? You have promised me an introduction.—You mention having consulted some friends on the MSS. Is not this contrary to our usual way? Instruct Mr. Murray not to allow his shopman to call the work "Child of Harrow's Pilgrimage"!!!!!! as he has done to some of my astonished friends, who wrote to inquire after my *sanity* on the occasion, as well they might. I have heard nothing of Murray, whom I scolded heartily. —Must I write more notes? Are there not enough?—Cawthorn must be kept back with the "Hints." I hope he is getting on with Hobhouse's quarto. Good evening. Yours ever,

BYRON.

LETTER LXVI.

Lord Byron to R. C. Dallas, Esq.

8, St. James's-street, October 31st, 1811.

Dear sir,

I HAVE already taken up so much of your time, that there needs no excuse on your part, but a great many on mine, for the present interruption. I have altered the passages according to your wish. With this note I send a few stanzas on a subject which has lately occupied much of my thoughts. They refer to the death of one, to whose name you are a *stranger*, and, consequently, cannot be interested. I mean them to complete the present volume. They relate to the same person, whom I have mentioned in canto 2d, and at the conclusion of the poem.

I by no means intend to identify myself with *Harold*, but to *deny* all connexion with him. If, in parts, I may be thought to have drawn from myself, believe me, it is but in parts, and I shall not own even to that. As to the "*Monastic dome*," &c., I thought those circumstances would suit him as well as any other, and I could describe what I had seen better than I could invent. I would not be such a fellow as I have made my hero for the world. Yours ever,

B.

LETTER LXVII.

R. C. Dallas, Esq. to Lord Byron.

December 14th, 1811.

My dear lord,

YOU sent but few notes for the first canto: there are a good many

for the second. The only liberty I took with them was, if you will allow me to use the expression, to *dove-tail* two of them, which, though connected in the sense, and relative to the reference in the poem, were disunited as they stood in your MS. I have omitted the passage respecting the Portuguese, which fell with the alteration you made in the stanzas relative to Cintra, and the insertion of which would overturn what your kindness had allowed me to obtain from you on that point. I have no objection to your politics, my dear lord, as, in the first place, I do not much give my mind to politics; and, in the next, I cannot but have observed, that you view politics, as well as some other subjects, through the optics of philosophy. But the note, or rather passage, I allude to is so discouraging to the cause of our country, that it could not fail to damp the ardour of your readers. Let me entreat you not to recall the sacrifice of it; at least, let it not appear in this volume, in which I am more anxious than I can express for your fame, both as a poet and as a philosopher. Except this, in which I thought myself warranted, I have not interfered with the subjects of the notes: yes, the word "fiction" I turned as you have seen, conceiving it to have been no fiction to YOUNG. But, when I did it, I determined not to send it to the press till it had met your eye. Indeed, you know that, even when a single word has struck me as better changed, my way has been to state my thought to you.

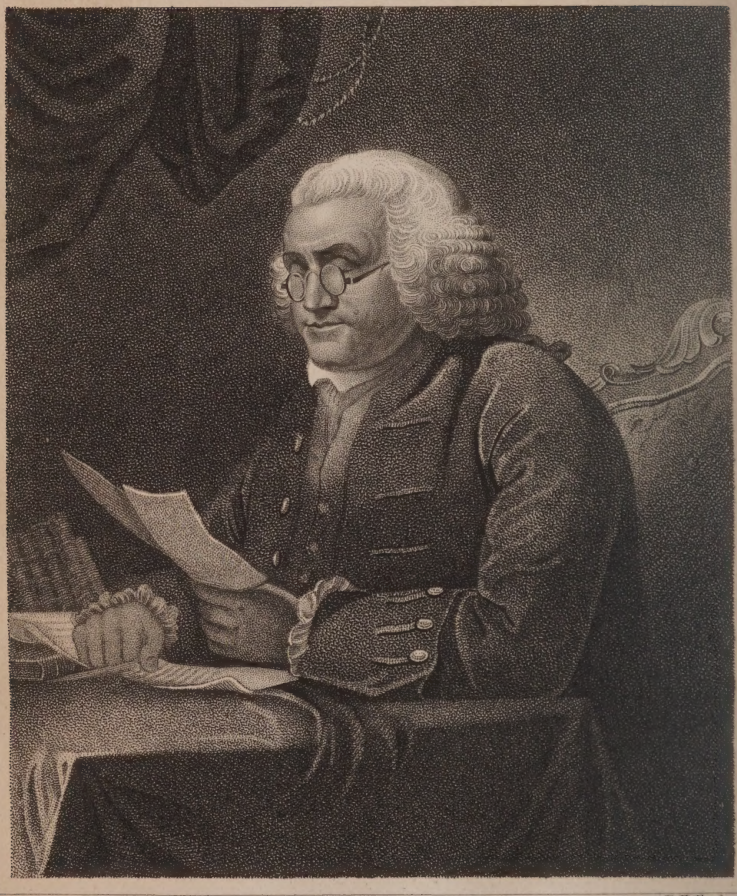
The Pilgrimage is concluded, and the notes to canto second, and the shorter poems are all placed in order. I am making the references, and to-day they will be ready for the printer. As there is not the slightest alteration in any of these notes, I shall not think it necessary to send them to you till you see them in the proofs. You have yet to see a revise of the last proofs, and a proof of the conclusion of the poem. My nephew tells me, you are going out of town in a few days. I should have been glad to have indulged in passing an hour or two, occasionally, with you; but regret is fruitless. I hope to have that pleasure when parliament meets. Before you go, pray let me have your *Preface*. I will send you the proofs as formerly.

All the notes relative to Greece and its modern literature I have placed together, referring them to this line,

"Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!"
Stanza 72, l. 1.

and, all being written at Athens, they form an excellent conclusion, under the head of NOCTES ATTICÆ. I ever am, my dear lord, yours faithfully,

R. C. DALLAS.



Martin Pinx.t *T. Kelly Sc.*

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

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SECTION V.

FROM THE LETTERS OF DOCTOR FRANKLIN AND GENERAL WASHINGTON.

LETTER I.

*Dr. Franklin to George Whitfield.**

Philadelphia, June 6, 1753.

Sir,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 2d instant, and am glad to hear that you increase in strength. I hope you will continue mending till you recover your former health and firmness. Let me know whether you still use the cold bath, and what effect it has.

As to the kindness you mention, I wish it could have been of more service to you.† But if it had, the only thanks I should desire is, that you would always be equally ready to serve any other person that may need your assistance, and so let good offices go round, for mankind are all of a family.

For my own part, when I am employed in serving others, I do not look upon myself as conferring favours, but as paying debts. In my travels, and since my settlement, I have received much kindness from men, to whom I shall never have any opportunity of making the least direct return; and numberless mercies from God, who is infinitely above being benefited by our services. Those kindnesses from men I can therefore only return on their fellow-men; and I can only shew my gratitude for these mercies from God by a readiness to help his other children, and my brethren. For I do not think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, can discharge our real obligations to each other, and much less those to our Creator. You will see in this my notion of good works; that I am far from expecting to merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree and eternal in duration: I can do nothing to deserve such rewards. He that, for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person, should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands, compared with those, who think they deserve heaven for the little good they do on earth. Even the mixed, imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world are rather from God's goodness than our merit; how much more such happiness of heaven!

The faith you mention has certainly its use in the world: I do not desire to see it diminished, nor would I endeavour to lessen it in any man. But I wish it were more productive of good works than I have generally seen it: I mean real good works; works of kindness, charity, mercy, and public spirit; not holiday-keeping, sermon-reading, or hearing; performing church ceremonies, or making long prayers, filled with flatteries and compliments, despised even by wise men, and much less capable of pleasing the Deity. The worship of God is a duty; the hearing and reading of sermons are useful; but if men rest in hearing and praying, as too many do, it is as if a tree should value itself on being watered

* One of the founders of the Methodists.

† Dr. Franklin had relieved Mr. Whitfield, in a paralytic case, by the application of electricity.

and putting forth leaves, though it never produced any fruit.

Your great Master thought much less of these outward appearances and professions than many of his modern disciples. He preferred the *doers* of the word to the mere *hearers;* the son, that seemingly refused to obey his father, and yet performed his commands, to him that professed his readiness, but neglected the work; the heretical but charitable Samaritan, to the uncharitable though orthodox priest and sanctified Levite; and those who gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, raiment to the naked, entertainment to the stranger, and relief to the sick, though they never heard of his name, he declares shall in the last day be accepted; when those who cry Lord! Lord! who value themselves upon their faith, though great enough to perform miracles, but have neglected good works, shall be rejected. He professed that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance; which implied his modest opinion, that there were some in his time who thought themselves so good, that they need not hear even him for improvement: but now-a-days we have scarce a little parson that does not think it the duty of every man within his reach to sit under his petty ministrations, and that whoever omits them offends God. I wish to such more humility, and to you health and happiness, being your friend and servant.

LETTER II.

Dr. Franklin to Miss Stevenson, at Wanstead.

Craven Street, May 16, 1760.

I SEND my good girl the books I mentioned to her last night. I beg her to accept of them as a small mark of my esteem and friendship. They are written in the familiar, easy manner, for which the French are so remarkable; and afford a good deal of philosophic and practical knowledge, unembarrassed with the dry mathematics, used by more exact reasoners, but which is apt to discourage young beginners.

I would advise you to read with a pen in your hand, and enter in a little book short hints of what you find that is curious, or that may be useful; for this will be the best method of imprinting such particulars in your memory, where they will be ready, either for practice on some future occasion, if they are matters of utility, or at least to adorn and improve your conversation, if they are rather points of curiosity. And, as many of the terms of science are such as you cannot have met with in your common reading, and may therefore be unacquainted with, I think it would be well for you to have a good dictionary at hand, to consult immediately when you meet with a word you do not comprehend the precise meaning of. This may at first seem troublesome and interrupting; but it is a trouble that will daily diminish, as you will daily find less and less occasion for your dictionary, as you become more acquainted with the terms; and, in the mean time, you will read with more satisfaction, because with more understanding. When any point occurs, in which you would be glad to have farther information than your book affords you, I beg you would not in the least apprehend that I should think it a trouble to receive and answer your questions. It will be a pleasure, and no trouble. For though I may not be able, out of my own little stock of knowledge, to afford you what you require, I can easily direct you to the books where it may most readily be found. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately.

LETTER III.

Dr. Franklin to John Alleyne, Esq.

Craven Street, August 9, 1768.

Dear Jack,

You desire, you say, my impartial thoughts on the subject of an early marriage, by way of answer to the numberless objections, that have been made by numerous persons, to your own. You may remember, when you consulted me on the occasion, that I thought youth on both sides to be no objection. Indeed, from the marriages that have fallen under my observation, I am rather inclined to think, that early ones stand the best chance of happiness. The temper and habits of the young are not yet become so stiff and uncomplying as when more advanced in life; they form more easily to each other, and hence many occasions of disgust are removed. And if youth has less of that prudence, which is necessary to manage a family, yet the parents and elder friends of young married persons are generally at hand to afford their advice, which amply supplies that defect; and by early marriage youth is sooner formed to regular and useful life; and possibly some of those accidents or connexions, that might have injured the constitution, or reputation, or both, are thereby happily prevented. Particular circumstances of particular persons may possibly sometimes make it prudent to delay entering into that state; but in general, when nature has rendered our bodies fit for it, the presumption is in nature's favour, that she has not judged amiss in making us desire it. Late marriages are often attended, too, with this farther inconvenience, that there is not the same chance that the parents shall live to see their offspring educated. "Late children," says the Spanish proverb, "are early orphans"—a melancholy reflection to those whose case it may be. With us, in America, marriages are generally in the morning of life; our children are therefore educated and settled in the world by noon; and thus, our business being done, we have an afternoon and evening of cheerful leisure to ourselves; such as our friend at present enjoys. By these early marriages we are blessed with more children; and, from the mode among us, founded by nature, of every mother suckling and nursing her own child, more of them are raised. Thence the swift progress of population among us, unparalleled in Europe. In fine, I am glad you are married, and congratulate you most cordially upon it. You are now in the way of becoming a useful citizen; and you have escaped the unnatural state of celibacy for life—the fate of many here, who never intended it, but who, having too long postponed the change of their condition, find, at length, that it is too late to think of it, and so live, all their lives, in a situation that greatly lessens a man's value. An odd volume of a set of books bears not the value of its proportion to the set: what think you of the odd half of a pair of scissors? it can't well cut any thing; it may possibly serve to scrape a trencher.

Pray make my compliments and best wishes acceptable to your bride. I am old and heavy, or I should, ere this, have presented them in person. I shall make but small use of the old man's privilege, that of giving advice to younger friends. Treat your wife always with respect; it will procure respect to you, not only from her, but from all that observe it. Never use a slighting expression to her, even in jest; for slights in jest, after frequent bandyings, are apt to end in angry earnest. Be studious in your profession, and you will be learned. Be industrious and frugal, and you will be rich. Be sober and temperate, and you will be healthy.

Be in general virtuous, and you will be happy. At least you will, by such conduct, stand the best chance for such consequences. I pray God to bless you both; being ever your affectionate friend.

LETTER IV.

Dr. Franklin to Gov. Franklin, New Jersey.*

London, August 19, 1772.

* * * In yours of May 14, you acquaint me with your indisposition, which gave me great concern. The resolution you have taken, to use more exercise, is extremely proper; and I hope you will steadily perform it. It is of the greatest importance to prevent diseases, since the cure of them by physic is so very precarious. In considering the different kinds of exercise, I have thought that the *quantum* of each is to be judged of, not by time or by distance, but by the degree of warmth it produces in the body: thus, when I observe if I am cold when I get into a carriage in a morning, I may ride all day without being warmed by it; that if on horseback my feet are cold, I may ride some hours before they become warm; but if I am ever so cold on foot, I cannot walk an hour briskly, without glowing from head to foot by the quickened circulation: I have been ready to say (using round numbers, without regard to exactness, but merely to make a great difference), that there is more exercise in *one* mile's riding on horseback than in *five* in a coach; and more in *one* mile's walking on foot than in *five* on horseback; to which I may add, that there is more in walking *one* mile up and down stairs, than in *five* on a level floor. The two latter exercises may be had within doors, when the weather discourages going abroad; and the last may be had when one is pinched for time, as containing a great quantity of exercise in a handful of minutes. The dumb-bell is another exercise of the latter compendious kind; by the use of it I have in forty swings quickened my pulse from sixty to one hundred beats in a minute, counted by a second watch: and I suppose the warmth generally increases with quickness of pulse.

* Dr. Franklin's son, to whom the first part of the Memoirs of his life is addressed.

LETTER V.

Dr. Franklin to Dr. Priestley.

London, September 19, 1772.

Dear sir,

In the affair of so much importance to you, wherein you ask my advice, I cannot, for want of sufficient premises, counsel you *what* to determine; but, if you please, I will tell you *how*. When those difficult cases occur, they are difficult, chiefly, because, while we have them under consideration, all the reasons *pro* and *con* are not present to the mind at the same time; but sometimes one set present themselves, and at other times another, the first being out of sight. Hence the various purposes or inclinations that alternately prevail, and the uncertainty that perplexes us. To get over this, my way is, to divide half a sheet of paper by a line into two columns: writing over the one *pro*, and over the other *con*; then, during three or four days' consideration, I put down, under the different heads, short hints of the different motives that at different times occur to me, *for* or *against* the measure. When I have thus got them all together in one view, I endeavour to estimate their respective weights, and, where I find two (one on each side), that seem equal, I strike

them both out. If I find a reason *pro* equal to some *two* reasons *con*, I strike out the *three*. If I judge some *two* reasons *con* equal to some *three* reasons *pro*, I strike out the *five;* and thus proceeding, I find at length where the *balance* lies; and if, after a day or two of farther consideration, nothing new that is of importance occurs on either side, I come to a determination accordingly. And, though the weight of reasons cannot be taken with the precision of algebraic quantities, yet, when each is thus considered separately and comparatively, and the whole lies before me, I think I can judge better, and am less liable to make a rash step; and, in fact, I have found great advantage from this kind of equation, in what may be called *moral* or *prudential algebra*.

Wishing sincerely that you may determine for the best, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

LETTER VI.

Dr. Franklin to Mrs. Thomas, at Lisle.

Paris, Feb. 8, 1777.

You are too early, *hussy*, as well as too saucy, in calling me *rebel;* you should wait for the event, which will determine whether it is a *rebellion* or only a *revolution*. Here the ladies are more civil; they call us *les Insurgens;* a character that usually pleases them: and, methinks, all other women who smart, or have smarted, under the tyranny of a bad husband, ought to be fixed in *revolution* principles, and act accordingly.

In my way to Canada last spring, I saw dear Mrs. Barrow, at New York. Mr. Barrow had been from her two or three months to keep Governor Tryon, and other tories, company on board the Asia, one of the king's ships which lay in the harbour; and in all that time that naughty man had not ventured once on shore to see her. Our troops were then pouring into the town, and she was packing up to leave it, fearing, as she had a large house, they would incommode her, by quartering officers in it. As she appeared in great perplexity, scarce knowing where to go, I persuaded her to stay; and I went to the general officers then commanding there, and recommended her to their protection; which they promised and performed. On my return from Canada, where I was a piece of a governor (and I think a very good one) for a fortnight, and might have been so till this time, if your wicked army, enemies to all good government, had not come and driven me out, I found her still in quiet possession of her house. I inquired how our people had behaved to her; she spoke in high terms of the respectful attention they had paid her, and the quiet and security they had procured her. I said I was glad of it; and that, if they had used her ill, I would have turned tory. Then, said she (with that pleasing gaiety so natural to her), *I wish they had.* For you must know she is a *toryess*, as well as you, and can as flippantly call *rebel*. I drank tea with her; we talked affectionately of you and our other friends the Wilkes's, of whom she had received no late intelligence: what became of her since, I have not heard. The street she lived in was some months after chiefly burnt down; but as the town was then, and ever since has been, in possession of the king's troops, I have had no opportunity of knowing whether she suffered any loss in the conflagration. I hope she did not, as, if she did, I should wish I had not persuaded her to stay there. I am glad to learn from you, that that unhappy, though deserving family, the W.'s, are getting into some busi-

ness that may afford them subsistence. I pray that God will bless them, and that they may see happier days. Mr. Cheap's and Dr. H.'s good fortunes please me. Pray learn, if you have not already learnt, like me, to be pleased with other people's pleasures, and happy with their happiness, when none occur of your own; then, perhaps, you will not so soon be weary of the place you chance to be in, and so fond of rambling to get rid of your *ennui*. I fancy you have hit upon the right reason of your being weary of St. Omers, *viz.* that you are out of temper, which is the effect of full living and idleness. A month in Bridewell, beating hemp, upon bread and water, would give you health and spirits, and subsequent cheerfulness and contentment with every other situation. I prescribe that regimen for you, my dear, in pure good-will, without a fee. And let me tell you, if you do not get into temper, neither Brussels nor Lisle will suit you. I know nothing of the price of living in either of those places; but I am sure a single woman, as you are, might, with economy, upon two hundred pounds a-year maintain herself comfortably any where; and me into the bargain. Do not invite me in earnest, however, to come and live with you; for, being posted here, I ought not to comply, and I am not sure I should be able to refuse. Present my respects to Mrs. Payne, and Mrs. Heathcot; for, though I have not the honour of knowing them, yet, as you say they are friends to the American cause, I am sure they must be women of good understanding. I know you wish you could see me, but, as you can't, I will describe myself to you. Figure me in your mind as jolly as formerly, and as strong and hearty, only a few years older; very plainly dressed, wearing my thin, grey, straight hair, that peeps out under my only *coiffure*, a fine fur cap; which comes down my forehead almost to my spectacles. Think how this must appear, among the powdered heads of Paris! I wish every lady and gentleman in France would only be so obliging as to follow my fashion, comb their own heads as I do mine, dismiss their *friseurs*, and pay me half the money they pay to them. You see the gentry might well afford this, and I could then enlist these *friseurs* (who are at least 100,000), and with the money I would maintain them, make a visit with them to England, and dress the heads of your ministers and privy counsellors; which I conceive at present to be *un peu dérangées*. Adieu! madcap; and believe me ever your affectionate friend and humble servant.

P. S. Don't be proud of this long letter. A fit of the gout, which has confined me five days, and made me refuse to see company, has given me a little time to trifle; otherwise it would have been very short; visitors and business would have interrupted: and, perhaps, with Mrs. Barrow, you wish they had.

LETTER VII.

Dr. Franklin to Dr. Cooper, Boston.

Paris, May 1, 1777.

I THANK you for your kind congratulations on my safe arrival here, and for your good wishes. I am, as you supposed, treated with great civility and respect by all orders of people; but it gives me still greater satisfaction to find that our being here is of some use to our country. On that head I cannot be more explicit at present.

I rejoice with you in the happy change of affairs in America last winter: I hope the same train of success will continue through the summer. Our enemies are disap-

pointed in the number of additional troops they purposed to send over. What they have been able to muster will not probably recruit their army to the state it was in the beginning of last campaign; and ours I hope will be equally numerous, better armed, and better clothed, than they have been heretofore.

All Europe is on our side of the question, as far as applause and good wishes can carry them. Those who live under arbitrary power do nevertheless approve of liberty, and wish for it: they almost despair of recovering it in Europe; they read the translations of our separate colony constitutions with rapture; and there are such numbers every where, who talk of removing to America, with their families and fortunes, as soon as peace and our independence shall be established, that it is generally believed we shall have a prodigious addition of strength, wealth, and arts, from the emigrations of Europe; and it is thought, that, to lessen or prevent such emigrations, the tyrannies established here must relax and allow more liberty to their people. Hence it is a common observation here, that our cause is *the cause of all mankind;* and that we are fighting for their liberty in defending our own. It is a glorious task assigned us by Providence; which has, I trust, given us spirit and virtue equal to it, and will at last crown it with success.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

LETTER VIII.

Dr. Franklin to Gen. Washington.

Passy, March 5, 1780.

Sir,

I HAVE received but lately the letter your excellency did me the honour of writing to me in recommendation of the Marquis de la Fayette. His modesty detained it long in his own hands. We became acquainted, however, from the time of his arrival at Paris; and his zeal for the honour of our country, his activity in our affairs here, and his firm attachment to our cause, and to you, impressed me with the same regard and esteem for him that your excellency's letter would have done had it been immediately delivered to me.

Should peace arrive after another campaign or two, and afford us a little leisure, I should be happy to see your excellency in Europe, and to accompany you, if my age and strength would permit, in visiting some of its ancient and most famous kingdoms. You would, on this side the sea, enjoy the great reputation you have acquired, pure and free from those little shades that the jealousy and envy of a man's countrymen and cotemporaries are ever endeavouring to cast over living merit. Here you would know, and enjoy, what posterity will say of Washington: for a thousand leagues have nearly the same effect as a thousand years. The feeble voice of those grovelling passions cannot extend so far either in time or distance. At present I enjoy that pleasure for you: as I frequently hear the old generals of this martial country (who study the maps of America, and mark upon them all your operations) speak with sincere approbation and great applause of your conduct; and join in giving you the character of one of the greatest captains of the age.

I must soon quit the scene, but you may live to see our country flourish, as it will amazingly and rapidly after the war is over; like a field of young Indian corn, which long fair weather and sunshine had enfeebled and discoloured, and which, in that weak state, by a thunder gust of violent wind, hail, and rain, seemed to be threatened with absolute

destruction; yet, the storm being past, it recovers fresh verdure, shoots up with double vigour, and delights the eye not of its owner only, but of every observing traveller.

The best wishes that can be formed for your health, honour, and happiness, ever attend you, from yours, &c.

LETTER IX.

Dr. Franklin to the Rev. William Nixon.

Passy, Sept. 5, 1781.

Rev. sir,

I DULY received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 25th past, together with the valuable little book, of which you are the author. There can be no doubt but that a gentleman of your learning and abilities might make a very useful member of society in our new country, and meet with encouragement there, either as an instructer in one of our universities, or as a clergyman of the church of Ireland. But I am not empowered to engage any person to go over thither, and my abilities to assist the distressed are very limited. I suppose you will soon be set at liberty in England by the cartel for the exchange of prisoners: in the mean time, if *five Louis d'ors* may be of present service to you, please to draw on me for that sum, and your bill shall be paid on sight. Some time or other you may have an opportunity of assisting with an equal sum a stranger who has equal need of it. Do so. By that means you will discharge any obligation you may suppose yourself under to me. Enjoin him to do the same on occasion. By pursuing such a practice, much good may be done with little money. Let kind offices go round: mankind are all of a family. I have the honour to be, Rev. sir, &c.

LETTER X.

Dr. Franklin to Edmund Burke, Esq. M. P.

Passy, Oct. 15, 1781.

Sir,

I RECEIVED but a few days since your very friendly letter of August last, on the subject of General Burgoyne.

Since the foolish part of mankind will make wars from time to time with each other,—not having sense enough otherwise to settle their differences,—it certainly becomes the wiser part, who cannot prevent those wars, to alleviate as much as possible the calamities attending them. Mr. Burke always stood high in my esteem; but his affectionate concern for his friend renders him still more amiable, and makes the honour he does me, of admitting me of the number, still more precious.

I do not think the congress have any wish to persecute General Burgoyne. I never heard, till I received your letter, that they had recalled him: if they have made such a resolution, it must be, I suppose, a conditional one, to take place in case their offer of exchanging him for Mr. Laurens should not be accepted; a resolution intended merely to enforce that offer.

I have just received an authentic copy of the resolve containing that offer, and authorizing me to make it. As I have no communication with your ministers, I send it enclosed to you.* If you can find any means of negotiating this business, I am sure the restoring another worthy man to his family and friends, will be an addition to your pleasure.

* Wanting.

With great and invariable respect and affection, I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.

LETTER XI.

Dr. Franklin to Mrs. Hewson.

Passy, January 27, 1783.

THE departure of my dearest friend,* which I learn from your last letter, greatly affects me. To meet with her once more in this life was one of the principal motives of my proposing to visit England again before my return to America. The last year carried off my friends Dr. Pringle and Dr. Fothergill, and lord Kaimes and lord Le Despencer; this has begun to take away the rest, and strikes the hardest. Thus the ties I had to that country, and indeed to the world in general, are loosened one by one; and I shall soon have no attachment left to make me unwilling to follow.

I intended writing when I sent the eleven books, but lost the time in looking for the first. I wrote with that; and hope it came to hand. I therein asked your counsel about my coming to England: on reflection, I think I can, from my knowledge of your prudence, foresee what it will be; *viz.* not to come too soon, lest it should seem braving and insulting some who ought to be respected. I shall, therefore, omit that journey till I am near going to America, and then just step over to take leave of my friends, and spend a few days with you. I purpose bringing Ben† with me, and perhaps may leave him under your care.

At length we are in peace, God be praised; and long, very long, may it continue. All wars are follies, very expensive and very mischievous ones: when will mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their differences by arbitration! Were they to do it, even by the cast of a die, it would be better than by fighting and destroying each other.

Spring is coming on, when travelling will be delightful. Can you not, when your children are all at school, make a little party and take a trip hither? I have now a large house, delightfully situated, in which I could accommodate you and two or three friends; and I am but half an hour's drive from Paris.

In looking forward, twenty-five years seem a long period; but in looking back, how short! Could you imagine that it is now full a quarter of a century since we were first acquainted? it was in 1757. During the greatest part of the time I lived in the same house with my dear deceased friend, your mother; of course you and I saw and conversed with each other much and often. It is to all our honours, that, in all that time, we never had among us the smallest misunderstanding. Our friendship has been all clear sunshine, without any, the least, clouds in its hemisphere. Let me conclude by saying to you, what I have had too frequent occasions to say to my other remaining old friends, *the fewer we become, the more let us love one another.* Adieu, &c.

LETTER XII.

Dr. Franklin to Sir Joseph Banks.

Passy, July 27, 1783.

Dear sir,

I RECEIVED your very kind letter by Dr. Blagden, and esteem myself much honoured by your friendly remembrance. I have been too much and too closely engaged in public affairs since his being here, to enjoy all the benefit of his conversation

* Refers to Mrs. Hewson's mother.

† Benjamin Franklin Bache, a grandson of Dr. Franklin, by his daughter.

you were so good as to intend me. I hope soon to have more leisure, and to spend a part of it in those studies that are much more agreeable to me than political operations.

I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable creatures, have reason and sense enough to settle their differences without cutting throats: for, in my opinion, *there never was a good war or a bad peace.* What vast additions to the conveniences and comforts of living might mankind have acquired, if the money spent in wars had been employed in works of public utility! What an extension of agriculture, even to the tops of our mountains! what rivers rendered navigable, or joined by canals! what bridges, aqueducts, new roads, and other public works, edifices, and improvements, rendering England a complete paradise, might not have been obtained by spending those millions in doing good, which in the last war have been spent in doing mischief; in bringing misery into thousands of families, and destroying the lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labour!

I am pleased with the late astronomical discoveries made by our society. Furnished as all Europe now is with academies of science, with nice instruments and the spirit of experiment, the progress of human knowledge will be rapid, and discoveries made, of which we have at present no conception. I begin to be almost sorry I was born so soon, since I cannot have the happiness of knowing what will be known one hundred years hence.

I wish continued success to the labours of the Royal Society, and that you may long adorn their chair; being, with the highest esteem, dear sir, &c.

Dr. Blagden will acquaint you with the experiment of a vast globe sent up into the air, much talked of here, and which, if prosecuted, may furnish means of new knowledge.

LETTER XIII.

Dr. Franklin to Mrs. Bache.

Passy, Jan. 26, 1784

My dear child,

YOUR care in sending me the newspapers is very agreeable to me. I received by captain Barney those relating to the *Cincinnati.* My opinion of the institution cannot be of much importance: I only wonder, that, when the united wisdom of our nation had, in the articles of confederation, manifested their dislike of establishing ranks of nobility, by authority either of the congress or of any particular state, a number of private persons should think proper to distinguish themselves and their posterity from their fellow-citizens, and form an order of *hereditary knights,* in direct opposition to the solemnly declared sense of their country! I imagine it must be likewise contrary to the good sense of most of those drawn into it, by the persuasion of its projectors, who have been too much struck with the ribands and crosses they have seen hanging to the button-holes of foreign officers. And I suppose those who disapprove of it have not hitherto given it much opposition, from a principle somewhat like that of your good mother, relating to punctilious persons, who are always exacting little observances of respect,—that "*if people can be pleased with small matters, it is a pity but they should have them.*" In this view, perhaps, I should not myself, if my advice had been asked, have objected to their wearing their riband and badge themselves, accord-

ing to their fancy, though I certainly should to the entailing it as an honour on their posterity. For honour, worthily obtained (as that for example of our officers), is in its nature a *personal* thing, and incommunicable to any but those who had some share in obtaining it. Thus, among the Chinese, the most ancient, and, from long experience, the wisest of nations, honour does not *descend*, but *ascends*. If a man, from his learning, his wisdom, or his valour, is promoted by the emperor to the rank of mandarin, his parents are immediately entitled to all the same ceremonies of respect from the people, that are established as due to the mandarin himself; on the supposition that it must have been owing to the education, instruction, and good example, afforded him by his parents, that he was rendered capable of serving the public. This *ascending* honour is, therefore, useful to the state, as it encourages parents to give their children a good and virtuous education. But the *descending honour*, to a posterity who could have no share in obtaining it, is not only groundless and absurd, but often hurtful to that posterity, since it is apt to make them proud, disdaining to be employed in useful arts, and thence falling into poverty, and all the meannesses, servility, and wretchedness, attending it; which is the present case with much of what is called the *noblesse* in Europe. Or if, to keep up the dignity of the family, estates are entailed entire on the eldest male heir, another pest to industry and improvement of the country is introduced, which will be followed by all the odious mixture of pride, and beggary, and idleness, that have half depopulated and decultivated Spain; occasioning continual extinction of families by the discouragements of marriage, and neglect in the improvement of estates. I wish, therefore, that the Cincinnati, if they must go on with their project, would direct the badges of their order to be worn by their fathers and mothers, instead of handing them down to their children. It would be a good precedent, and might have good effects. It would also be a kind of obedience to the fifth commandment, in which God enjoins us to *honour* our father and mother, but has nowhere directed us to honour our children. And certainly no mode of honouring those immediate authors of our being can be more effectual than that of doing praiseworthy actions, which reflect honour on those who gave us our education; or more becoming than that of manifesting, by some public expression or token, that it is to their instruction and example we ascribe the merit of those actions.

But the absurdity of *descending honours* is not a mere matter of philosophical opinion; it is capable of mathematical demonstration. A man's son, for instance, is but half of his family, the other half belonging to the family of his wife. His son, too, marrying into another family, his share in the grandson is but a fourth; in the great grandson, by the same process, it is but an eighth. In the next generation a sixteenth; the next a thirty-second; the next a sixty-fourth; the next an hundred and twenty-eighth; the next a two hundred and fifty-sixth; and the next a five hundred and twelfth: thus, in nine generations, which will not require more than three hundred years (no very great antiquity for a family) our present Chevalier of the Order of Cincinnatus's share in the then existing knight, will be but a five hundred and twelfth part; which, allowing the present certain fidelity of American wives to be insured down through all those nine generations, is so small a consideration, that methinks no reasonable man would hazard, for the sake of it, the disagreeable consequences of the

jealousy, envy, and ill-will of his countrymen.

Let us go back with our calculation from this young noble, the five hundred and twelfth part of the present knight, through his nine generations, till we return to the year of the institution. He must have had a father and mother—they are two; each of them had a father and mother—they are four. Those of the next preceding generation will be eight, the next sixteen, the next thirty-two, the next sixty-four, the next one hundred and twenty-eight, the next two hundred and fifty-six, and the ninth, in this retrocession, five hundred and twelve; who must be now existing, and all contribute their proportion of this future Chevalier de Cincinnatus. These, with the rest, make together as follows:—

	2
	4
	8
	16
	32
	64
	128
	256
	512
Total	1022

One thousand and twenty-two men and women, contributors to the formation of one knight. And, if we are to have a thousand of these future knights, there must be now and hereafter existing one million and twenty-two thousand fathers and mothers, who are to contribute to their production, unless a part of the number are employed in making more knights than one. Let us strike off, then, the twenty-two thousand, on the supposition of this double employ, and then consider whether, after a reasonable estimation of the number of rogues, and fools, and scoundrels, and prostitutes, that are mixed with, and make up, necessarily, their million of predecessors, posterity will have much reason to boast of the noble blood of the then existing set of chevaliers of Cincinnatus. The future genealogists, too, of these chevaliers, in proving the lineal descent of their honour through so many generations (even supposing honour capable in its nature of descending), will only prove the small share of this honour which can be justly claimed by any one of them, since the above simple process in arithmetic makes it quite plain and clear, that, in proportion as the antiquity of the family shall augment, the right to the honour of the ancestor will diminish; and a few generations more would reduce it to something so small as to be very near an absolute nullity. I hope, therefore, that the order will drop this part of their project, and content themselves as the knights of the garter, bath, thistle, St. Louis, and other orders of Europe do, with a life enjoyment of their little badge and riband, and let the distinction die with those who have merited it. This, I imagine, will give no offence. For my own part, I shall think it a convenience, when I go into a company where there may be faces unknown to me, if I discover, by this badge, the persons who merit some particular expression of my respect; and it will save modest virtue the trouble of calling for our regard, by awkward, round-about intimations of having been heretofore employed as officers in the continental service.

The gentleman, who made the voyage to France, to provide the ribands and medals, has executed his commission. To me they seem tolerably done; but all such things are criticised. Some find fault with the Latin, as wanting classical elegance and correctness; and since our nine universities were not able to furnish better Latin, it was pity, they say, that the mottos had not been in English.

Others object to the title, as not properly assumable by any but General Washington, and a few others, who served without pay. Others object to the *bald eagle*,* as looking too much like a *dindon* or turkey. For my own part, I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country: he is a bird of bad moral character: he does not get his living honestly: you may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labour of the fishing hawk; and when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him, and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is never in good case, but, like those among men, who live by sharping and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward: the little *king bird*, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly, and drives him out of the district. He is, therefore, by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *king-birds* from our country; though exactly fit for that order of knights, which the French call *chevaliers d'industrie*. I am on this account not displeased, that the figure is not known as a bald eagle, but looks more like a turkey. For, in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird; and, withal, a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours; the first of the species seen in Europe being brought to France by the Jesuits from Canada, and served up at the wedding table of Charles the Ninth. He is, besides (though a little vain and silly, 'tis true, but not the worse emblem for that), a bird of courage, and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British guards, who should presume to invade his farm yard with a *red* coat on.

I shall not enter into the criticisms made upon their Latin. The gallant officers of America may not have the merit of being great scholars; but they undoubtedly merit much, as brave soldiers, from their country, which should therefore not leave them merely to *fame* for their "*virtutis premium*,"* which is one of their Latin mottos. Their "*esto perpetua*," another, is an excellent wish, if they meant it for their country; bad, if intended for their order. The states should not only restore to them the *omnia* of their first motto, which many of them have left and lost, but pay them justly, and reward them generously. They should not be suffered to remain with all their new-created chivalry *entirely* in the situation of the gentleman in the story, which their *omnia reliquit*† reminds me of. You know every thing makes me recollect some story. He had built a very fine house, and thereby much impaired his fortune. He had a pride, however, in showing it to his acquaintance. One of them, after viewing it all, remarked a motto over the door, OIA VANITAS. What, says he, is the meaning of OIA? 'tis a word I don't understand. I will tell you, said the gentleman: I had a mind to have the motto cut on a piece of smooth marble, but there was not room for it between the ornaments, to be put in characters large enough to be read. I therefore made use of a contraction anciently very common in Latin manuscripts, whereby the *m's* and *n's* in words are omitted, and the omission noted by a little dash above, which you may see there, so that the word is *omnia*,

* The white-headed erne, or bald eagle (*falco leucocephalus*, LINN.), peculiar to North America; and the emblem adopted by the society of Cincinnati.

* Reward of virtue. † Has left all.

OMNIA VANITAS. O, said his friend, I now comprehend the meaning of your motto: it relates to your edifice; and signifies, that, if you have abridged your *omnia*, you have nevertheless left your VANITAS legible at full length.

I am, as ever, your affectionate father.

LETTER XIV.

Dr. Franklin to B. Vaughan, Esq.

Passy, July 26, 1784.

Dear friend,

I HAVE received several letters from you lately, dated June 16, June 30, and July 13. I thank you for the information respecting the proceedings of your West India merchants, or rather planters. The restraints, whatever they may be, upon our commerce with your islands, will prejudice their inhabitants, I apprehend, more than us. It is wonderful how preposterously the affairs of this world are managed. Naturally, one would imagine, that the interests of a few particulars should give way to general interest. But particulars manage their affairs with so much more application, industry, and address, than the public do theirs, that general interest most commonly gives way to particular. We assemble parliaments and councils to have the benefit of their collected wisdom; but we necessarily have, at the same time, the inconvenience of their collected passions, prejudices, and private interests. By the help of these, artful men overpower the wisdom, and dupe its possessors; and, if we may judge by the acts, decrees, and edicts, all the world over, for regulating commerce, an assembly of wise men is the greatest fool upon earth. I have received Cook's Voyages, which you put Mr. Oswald in the way of sending to me. By some mistake, the first volume was omitted; and, instead of it, a duplicate sent of the third. If there is a good print of Cook, I should be glad to have it, being personally acquainted with him. I thank you for the pamphlets by Mr. Estlin. Every thing you send me gives me pleasure; to receive your account would give me more than all.

I am told that the little pamphlet of *Advice to such as would remove to America*,* is reprinted in London, with my name to it, which I would rather had been omitted; but wish to see a copy when you have an opportunity of sending it.

Mr. Hartley has long continued here, in expectation of instructions for making a treaty of commerce, but they do not come, and I begin to suspect none are intended; though, perhaps, the delay is only occasioned by the over-great burthen of business at present on the shoulders of your ministers. We do not press the matter, but are content to wait till they can see their interest respecting America more clearly, being certain that we can shift as well as you without a treaty.

The conjectures I sent you, concerning the cold of last winter, still appear to me probable: the moderate season in Russia and Canada does not weaken them. I think our frost here began about the 24th of December, in America the 12th of January. I thank you for recommending to me Mr. Arbuthnot; I have had pleasure in his conversation. I wish much to see the new pieces you had in hand. I congratulate you on the return of your wedding-day, and wish, for your sake and Mrs. Vaughan's, that you may see a great many of them, all as happy as the first.

I like the young stranger very much: he seems sensible, ingenious,

* See Writings, part iii. Miscellanies, sect. ii.

and modest, has a good deal of instruction, and makes judicious remarks. He will probably distinguish himself advantageously.

I have not yet heard from Mr. Nairne.

Dr. Price's pamphlet of Advice to America is a good one, and will do good. You ask "what remedy I have for the growing luxury of my country, which gives so much *offence* to all *English travellers* without exception?" I answer, that I think it exaggerated, and that travellers are no good judges, whether our luxury is growing or diminishing. Our people are hospitable, and have, indeed, too much pride in displaying upon their tables before strangers the plenty and variety that our country affords. They have the vanity too of sometimes borrowing one another's plate, to entertain more splendidly. Strangers, being invited from house to house, and meeting every day with a feast, imagine what they see is the ordinary way of living of all the families where they dine; when perhaps each family lives a week after upon the remains of the dinner given. It is, I own, a folly in our people to give *such offence* to *English travellers*. The first part of the proverb is thereby verified, that *fools make feasts*. I wish in this case the other were as true, *and wise men eat them*. These travellers might, one would think, find some fault they could more decently reproach us with, than that of our excessive civility to them as strangers.

I have not, indeed, yet thought of a remedy for luxury: I am not sure that in a great state it is capable of a remedy; nor that the evil is, in itself, always so great as it is represented. Suppose we include in the definition of luxury all unnecessary expense, and then let us consider whether laws to prevent such expense are possible to be executed in a great country; and whether, if they could be executed, our people generally would be happier, or even richer. Is not the hope of one day being able to purchase and enjoy luxuries a great spur to labour and industry? May not luxury, therefore, produce more than it consumes, if, without such a spur, people would be, as they are naturally enough inclined to be, lazy and indolent? To this purpose I remember a circumstance. The skipper of a shallop, employed between Cape May and Philadelphia, had done us some small service, for which he refused pay. My wife, understanding that he had a daughter, sent her as a present a new-fashioned cap. Three years after, this skipper being at my house with an old farmer of Cape May, his passenger, he mentioned the cap, and how much his daughter had been pleased with it; but, said he, it proved a dear cap to our congregation. How so? When my daughter appeared in it at meeting, it was so much admired, that all the girls resolved to get such caps from Philadelphia; and my wife and I computed that the whole could not have cost less than one hundred pounds. True, said the farmer, but you do not tell all the story: I think the cap was nevertheless an advantage to us; for it was the first thing that set our girls upon knitting worsted mittens for sale at Philadelphia, that they might have wherewithal to buy caps and ribands there; and you know that that industry has continued, and is likely to continue and increase to a much greater value, and answer better purposes. Upon the whole, I was more reconciled to this little piece of luxury, since not only the girls were made happier by having fine caps, but the Philadelphians by the supply of warm mittens.

In our commercial towns upon the sea coast, fortunes will occasionally be made. Some of those who grow rich will be prudent, live within bounds, and preserve what they

have gained for their posterity. Others, fond of showing their wealth, will be extravagant, and ruin themselves. Laws cannot prevent this, and perhaps it is not always an evil to the public. A shilling spent idly by a fool, may be picked up by a wiser person, who knows better what to do with it: it is, therefore, not lost. A vain, silly fellow builds a fine house, furnishes it richly, lives in it expensively, and in a few years ruins himself; but the masons, carpenters, smiths, and other honest tradesmen, have been, by his employ, assisted in maintaining and raising their families; the farmer has been paid for his labour, and encouraged, and the estate is now in better hands. In some cases, indeed, certain modes of luxury may be a public evil, in the same manner as it is a private one. If there be a nation, for instance, that exports its beef and linen to pay for its importations of claret and porter, while a great part of its people live upon potatoes, and wear no shirts, wherein does it differ from the sot, who lets his family starve, and sells his clothes to buy drink? Our American commerce is, I confess, a little in this way. We sell our victuals to your islands for rum and sugar; the substantial necessaries of life for its superfluities. But we have plenty, and live well, nevertheless; though, by being soberer, we might be richer. By the by, here is just issued an *arrèt* of council taking off all the duties upon the exportation of brandies, which, it is said, will render them cheaper in America than your rum: in which case there is no doubt but they will be preferred, and we shall be better able to bear your restrictions on our commerce. There are views here, by augmenting their settlements, of being able to supply the growing people of America with the sugar that may be wanted there. On the whole, I believe, England will get as little by the commercial war she has begun with us as she did by the military. But to return to luxury.

The vast quantity of forest lands we have yet to clear and put in order for cultivation, will for a long time keep the body of our nation laborious and frugal. Forming an opinion of our people and their manners, by what is seen among the inhabitants of the sea ports, is judging from an improper sample. The people of the trading towns may be rich and luxurious, while the country possesses all the virtues that tend to private happiness and public prosperity. Those towns are not much regarded by the country; they are hardly considered as an essential part of these states. And the experience of the last war has shewn, that their being in possession of the enemy did not necessarily draw on the subjection of the country, which bravely continued to maintain its freedom and independence notwithstanding.

It has been computed by some political arithmetician, that, if every man and woman would work four hours each day in something useful, that labour would produce sufficient to procure all the necessaries and comforts of life; want and misery would be banished out of the world, and the rest of the twenty-four hours might be leisure and pleasure.

What then occasions so much want and misery? It is the employment of men and women in works that produce neither the necessaries nor conveniences of life; who, with those who do nothing, consume the necessaries raised by the laborious. To explain this,—

The first elements of wealth are obtained by labour from the earth and waters. I have land, and raise corn: with this I feed a family that does nothing: my corn will be consumed; and, at the end of the year, I shall be no richer than I was at the beginning. But if, while I feed

them, I employ them, some in spinning, others in hewing timber and sawing boards, others in making bricks, &c. for building, the value of my corn will be arrested, and remain with me; and, at the end of the year, we may all be better clothed and better lodged. And if, instead of employing a man I feed in making bricks, I employ him in fiddling for me, the corn he eats is gone, and no part of his manufacture remains to augment the wealth and the conveniences of the family. I shall therefore be the poorer for this fiddling man, unless the rest of my family work more or eat less to make up the deficiency he occasions.

Look round the world, and see the millions employed in doing nothing, or in something that amounts to nothing, when the necessaries and conveniences of life are in question. What is the bulk of commerce, for which we fight and destroy each other, but the toil of millions for superfluities, to the great hazard and loss of many lives by the constant dangers of the sea? How much labour spent in building and fitting great ships to go to China and Arabia for tea and for coffee, to the West Indies for sugar, to America for tobacco! These things cannot be called the necessaries of life, for our ancestors lived very comfortably without them.

A question may be asked: Could all these people, now employed in raising, making, or carrying superfluities, be subsisted by raising necessaries? I think they might. The world is large, and a great part of it still uncultivated. Many hundred millions of acres in Asia, Africa, and America, are still forest, and a great deal even in Europe. On one hundred acres of this forest a man might become a substantial farmer; and one hundred thousand men employed in clearing each his one hundred acres (instead of being, as they are, French hair dressers), would hardly brighten a spot big enough to be visible from the moon (unless with Herschell's telescope), so vast are the regions still in the world unimproved.

'Tis however some comfort to reflect, that, upon the whole, the quantity of industry and prudence among mankind exceeds the quantity of idleness and folly. Hence the increase of good buildings, farms cultivated, and populous cities filled with wealth all over Europe, which, a few ages since, were only to be found on the coasts of the Mediterranean. And this, notwithstanding the mad wars continually raging, by which are often destroyed in one year the works of many years' peace. So that we may hope the luxury of a few merchants on the sea coast, will not be the ruin of America.

One reflection more, and I will end this long, rambling letter. Almost all parts of our bodies require some expense. The feet demand shoes, the legs stockings, the rest of the body clothing, and the belly a good deal of victuals. *Our* eyes, though exceedingly useful, ask, when reasonable, only the cheap assistance of *spectacles*, which could not much impair our finances. But THE EYES OF OTHER PEOPLE are the eyes that ruin us. If all but myself were blind, I should want neither fine clothes, fine houses, nor fine furniture. Adieu, my dear friend. I am yours ever.

P. S. This will be delivered to you by my grandson. I am persuaded you will afford him your civilities and counsels. Please to accept a little present of books I send by him, curious for the beauty of the impression.

LETTER XV.

Dr. Franklin to David Hartley, Esq. M. P.

Passy, July 5, 1785.

I CANNOT quit the coasts of Europe without taking leave of my ever dear friend Mr. Hartley. We were long fellow labourers in the best of all works, the work of peace. I leave you still in the field; but, having finished my day's task, I am going home *to go to bed!* Wish me a good night's rest, as I do you a pleasant evening. Adieu! And believe me ever yours most affectionately.*

LETTER XVI.

Dr. Franklin to Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.

Philadelphia, Feb. 24, 1786.

Dear friend,

I RECEIVED lately your kind letter of November 27. My reception here was, as you have heard, very honourable indeed; but I was betrayed by it, and by some remains of ambition, from which I had imagined myself free, to accept of the chair of government for the state of Pennsylvania, when the proper thing for me was repose and a private life. I hope, however, to be able to bear the fatigue for one year, and then to retire.

I have much regretted our having so little opportunity for conversation when we last met. You could have given me informations and counsels that I wanted; but we were scarce a minute together without being broken in upon. I am to thank you, however, for the pleasure I had after our parting, in reading the new book you gave me, which I think generally well written and likely to do good; though the reading time of most people is of late so taken up with newspapers and little periodical pamphlets, that few now-a-days venture to attempt reading a quarto volume. I have admired to see, that, in the last century, a folio, *Burton on Melancholy*, went through six editions in about forty years. We have, I believe, more readers now, but not of such large books.

You seem desirous of knowing what progress we make here in improving our governments. We are, I think, in the right road of improvement, for we are making experiments. I do not oppose all that seem wrong, for the multitude are more effectually set right by experience, than kept from going wrong by reasoning with them: and I think we are daily more and more enlightened; so that I have no doubt of our obtaining, in a few years, as much public felicity as good government is capable of affording. Your newspapers are filled with fictitious accounts of anarchy, confusion, distresses, and miseries, we are supposed to be involved in, as consequences of the revolution; and the few remaining friends of the old government among us take pains to magnify every little inconvenience a change in the course of commerce may have occasioned. To obviate the complaints they endeavour to excite, was written the enclosed little piece,* from which you may form a truer idea of our situation than your own public prints would give you: and I can assure you, that the great body of our nation find themselves happy in the change, and have not the smallest inclination to return to the domination of Britain. There could not be a stronger proof of the general approbation of the measures that promoted the change, and of the change itself, than has been given by the assembly and council of this state, in the nearly unanimous choice for their governor, of one, who had been so much concerned in those

* Written in his eightieth year.

* Uncertain what piece is alluded to.

measures; the assembly being themselves the unbribed choice of the people, and therefore may be truly supposed of the same sentiments. I say nearly unanimous, because, of between seventy and eighty votes, there were only my own and one other in the negative.

As to my domestic circumstances, of which you kindly desire to hear something, they are at present as happy as I could wish them. I am surrounded by my offspring, a dutiful and affectionate daughter in my house, with six grandchildren, the eldest of which you have seen, who is now at college in the next street, finishing the learned part of his education; the others promising, both for parts and good dispositions. What their conduct may be when they grow up, and enter the important scenes of life, I shall not live to *see*, and I cannot *foresee*. I therefore enjoy among them the present hour, and leave the future to Providence.

He that raises a large family does indeed, while he lives to observe them, *stand*, as Watts says, *a broader mark for sorrow;* but then he stands a broader mark for pleasure too. When we launch our little fleet of barks into the ocean, bound to different ports, we hope for each a prosperous voyage; but contrary winds, hidden shoals, storms, and enemies, come in for a share in the disposition of events; and, though these occasion a mixture of disappointment, yet, considering the risk where we can make no insurance, we should think ourselves happy if some return with success. My son's son (Temple Franklin), whom you have also seen, having had a fine farm of six hundred acres conveyed to him by his father when we were at Southampton, has dropped, for the present, his views of acting in the political line, and applies himself ardently to the study and practice of agriculture. This is much more agreeable to me, who esteem it the most useful, the most independent, and, therefore, the noblest of employments. His lands are on navigable water, communicating with the Delaware, and but about sixteen miles from this city. He has associated to himself a very skilful English farmer, lately arrived here, who is to instruct him in the business, and partakes for a term of the profits; so that there is a great apparent probability of their success. You will kindly expect a word or two concerning myself. My health and spirits continue, thanks to God, as when you saw me. The only complaint I then had, does not grow worse, and is tolerable. I still have enjoyment in the company of my friends; and, being easy in my circumstances, have many reasons to like living. But the course of nature must soon put a period to my present mode of existence. This I shall submit to with less regret, as, having seen, during a long life, a good deal of this world, I feel a growing curiosity to be acquainted with some other; and can cheerfully, with filial confidence, resign my spirit to the conduct of that great and good Parent of mankind who created it, and who has so graciously protected and prospered me from my birth to the present hour. Wherever I am, I hope always to retain the pleasing remembrance of your friendship; being, with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

We all join in respects to Mrs. Shipley, and best wishes for the whole amiable family.

LETTER XVII.

Dr. Franklin to M. le Marquis de la Fayette.

Philadelphia, April 17, 1787.

Dear friend,

I RECEIVED the kind letter you did me the honour of writing in

February, 1786. The indolence of old age, and the perpetual teasing of too much business, have made me so bad a correspondent, that I have hardly written a letter to any friend in Europe during the last twelvemonth: but, as I have always a pleasure in hearing from them, which I cannot expect will be continued if I do not write to them, I again take up my pen, and begin with those whose correspondence is of the greatest value; among which I reckon that of the Marquis de la Fayette.

I was glad to hear of your safe return to Paris, after so long and fatiguing a journey. That is the place where your enlightened zeal for the welfare of our country can employ itself most to our advantage; and I know it is always at work, and indefatigable. Our enemies are, as you observe, very industrious in depreciating our national character. Their abuse sometimes provokes me, and I am almost ready to retaliate; but I have held my hand, though there is abundant room for recrimination; because I would do nothing that might hasten another quarrel, by exasperating those who are still sore from their late disgraces. Perhaps it may be best that they should please themselves with fancying us weak, and poor, and divided, and friendless; they may then not be jealous of our growing strength (which, since the peace, does really make rapid progress), and may be less intent on interrupting it.

I do not wonder that the Germans, who know little of free constitutions, should be ready to suppose that such cannot support themselves. We think they may, and we hope to prove it. That there should be faults in our first sketches or plans of government is not surprising; rather, considering the times and the circumstances under which they were formed, it is surprising that the faults are so few. Those in the general confederating articles are now about to be considered in a convention called for that express purpose; these will indeed be the most difficult to rectify. Those of particular states will undoubtedly be rectified, as their inconveniences shall by experience be made manifest. And, whatever difference of sentiment there may be among us respecting particular regulations, the enthusiastic rejoicings, with which the day of declared independence is annually celebrated, demonstrate the universal satisfaction of the people with the revolution and its grand principles.

I enclose the vocabulary you sent me, with the words of the Shawanese and Delaware languages, which Colonel Harmar has procured for me. He is promised one more complete, which I shall send you as soon as it comes to my hands.

My grandson, whom you so kindly inquire after, is at his estate in the Jerseys, and amuses himself with cultivating his lands. I wish he would seriously make a business of it, and renounce all thoughts of public employment; for I think agriculture the most honourable, because the most independent, of all professions. But I believe he hankers a little after Paris, or some other of the polished cities of Europe, thinking the society there preferable to what he meets with in the woods of Ancocas; as it certainly is. If he was now here, he would undoubtedly join with me and the rest of my family (who are much flattered by your remembrance of them) in best wishes for your health and prosperity, and that of your whole amiable fireside. You will allow an old friend of fourscore to say he *loves* your wife, when he adds, and children, and prays God to bless them all. Adieu! and believe me, ever, yours most affectionately.

LETTER XVIII.

Dr. Franklin to Count de Buffon, Paris.

Philadelphia, Nov. 19, 1787.

Dear sir,

I AM honoured by your letter desiring to know by what means I am relieved in a disorder, with which you are also unfortunately afflicted. I have tried all the noted prescriptions for *diminishing* the stone, without perceiving any good effect. But, observing temperance in eating, avoiding wine and cider, and using daily the dumb-bell, which exercises the upper part of the body without much moving the parts in contact with the stone, I think I have prevented its *increase*. As the roughness of the stone lacerates a little the neck of the bladder, I find, that, when the urine happens to be sharp, I have much pain in making water, and frequent urgencies. For relief under this circumstance I take, going to bed, the bigness of a pigeon's egg of jelly of blackberries: the receipt for making it is enclosed. While I continue to do this every night, I am generally easy the day following, making water pretty freely, and with long intervals. I wish most sincerely that this simple remedy may have the same happy effect with you. Perhaps currant jelly, or the jelly of apples, or of raspberries, may be equally serviceable; for I suspect the virtue of the jelly may lie principally in the boiled sugar, which is in some degree candied by the boiling of the jelly. Wishing you, for your own sake, much more ease, and, for the sake of mankind, many more years, I remain, with the greatest esteem and respect, dear sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant.

LETTER XIX.

Dr. Franklin to Dr. Rush.

Philadelphia (without date, but supposed to be in 1789).

My dear friend,

DURING our long acquaintance you have shewn many instances of your regard for me; yet I must now desire you to add one more to the number, which is, that, if you publish your ingenious discourse on the *moral sense*, you will totally omit and suppress that most extravagant encomium on your friend Franklin, which hurt me exceedingly in the unexpected hearing, and will mortify me beyond conception, if it should appear from the press. Confiding in your compliance with this earnest request, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

LETTER XX.

Dr. Franklin to David Hartley, Esq.

Philadelphia, Dec. 4, 1789.

My very dear friend,

I RECEIVED your favour of August last. Your kind condolences, on the painful state of my health, are very obliging. I am thankful to God, however, that, among the numerous ills human life is subject to, one only of any importance is fallen to my lot; and that so late as almost to insure that it can be but of short duration.

The convulsions in France are attended with some disagreeable circumstances; but, if by the struggle she obtains, and secures for the nation, its future liberty, and a good constitution, a few years' enjoyment of those blessings will amply repair all the damages their acquisition may have occasioned. God grant, that not only the love of liberty, but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man, may pervade all the nations of

the earth; so that a philosopher may set his foot any where on its surface, and say, This is my country! Your wishes for a cordial and perpetual friendship between Britain and her ancient colonies, are manifested continually in every one of your letters to me. Something of my disposition on the same subject may appear to you in casting your eye over the enclosed paper.* I do not by this opportunity send you any of our gazettes; because the postage from Liverpool would be more than they are worth. I can now only add my best wishes of every kind of felicity for the three amiable Hartleys, to whom I have the honour of being an affectionate friend and most obedient humble servant.

LETTER XXI.

To *****.

(Without date.)

Dear sir,

I HAVE read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument it contains against a particular Providence, though you allow a general Providence, you strike at the foundations of all religion. For, without the belief of a Providence that takes cognizance of, guards and guides, and may favour particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear its displeasure, or to pray for its protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles, though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my opinion, that, though your reasonings are subtle, and may prevail with some readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject; and the consequence of printing this piece will be a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face. But, were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous life without the assistance afforded by religion; you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice, and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common temptations. But think how great a portion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced, inconsiderate youth, of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great point for its security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is, to your religious education, for the habits of virtue, upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our most distinguished authors. For, among us, it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a youth, to be raised into the company of men, should prove his manhood by beating his mother. I would advise you, therefore, not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person, whereby you will save yourself a great deal of mortification from the enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of regret and repentance. If men are so wicked *with religion*, what would they be if *without it!** I intend this letter itself as a *proof* of my friendship, and therefore add no *professions* to it; but subscribe simply yours.

* Uncertain what paper.

* Montesquieu says, "La religion, même fausse, est le meilleur garant que les hommes puissent avoir de la probité des hommes." (Esprit des Loix, chap. 25, liv. 8.)

LETTER XXII.

Lord Howe to Dr. Franklin.

Eagle, June the 20th, 1776.

I CANNOT, my worthy friend, permit the letters and parcels, which I have sent (in the state I received them), to be landed, without adding a word upon the subject of the injurious extremities in which our unhappy disputes have engaged us.

You will learn the nature of my mission from the official despatches which I have recommended to be forwarded by the same conveyance. Retaining all the earnestness I ever expressed, to see our differences accommodated, I shall conceive, if I meet with the disposition in the colonies which I was once taught to expect, the most flattering hopes of proving serviceable in the objects of the king's paternal solicitude, by promoting the establishment of lasting peace and union with the colonies. But, if the deep-rooted prejudices of America, and the necessity of preventing her trade from passing into foreign channels, must keep us still a divided people; I shall, from every private, as well as public motive, most heartily lament, that this is not the moment wherein those great objects of my ambition are to be attained; and that I am to be longer deprived of an opportunity to assure you, personally, of the regard with which I am your sincere and faithful humble servant, HOWE.

P. S. I was disappointed of the opportunity I expected for sending this letter at the time it was dated; and have ever since been prevented, by calms and contrary winds, from getting here to inform general Howe of the commission with which I have the satisfaction to be charged, and of his being joined in it.

Off of Sandy Hook, 12th of July.

Superscribed, HOWE.

LETTER XXIII.

Dr. Franklin to Lord Howe.

Philadelphia, July 30, 1776.

My lord,

I RECEIVED safe the letters your lordship so kindly forwarded to me, and beg you to accept *my* thanks.

The official despatches, to which you refer me, contain nothing more than what we had seen in the act of parliament, viz. "Offers of pardon upon submission;" which I was sorry to find; as it must give your lordship pain to be sent so far on so hopeless a business.

Directing pardons to be offered to the colonies, who are the very parties injured, expresses, indeed, that opinion of our ignorance, baseness, and insensibility, which your uninformed and proud nation has long been pleased to entertain of us; but it can have no other effect than that of increasing our resentments.——It is impossible we should think of submission to a government, that has, with the most wanton barbarity and cruelty, burned our defenceless towns in the midst of winter; excited the savages to massacre our (peaceful) farmers, and our slaves to murder their masters; and is even now bringing foreign mercenaries to deluge our settlements with blood. These atrocious injuries have extinguished every spark of affection for that parent country we once held so dear: but, were it possible for *us* to forget and forgive them, it is not possible for *you* (I mean the British nation) to forgive the people you have so heavily injured; you can never confide again in those as fellow-subjects, and permit them to enjoy equal freedom, to whom you know you have given such just causes of lasting enmity; and this must impel you, were we again under your government, to endeavour the breaking our spirit by

the severest tyranny, and obstructing, by every means in your power, our growing strength and prosperity.

But your lordship mentions "the king's paternal solicitude for promoting the establishment of lasting peace and union with the colonies." If by *peace* is here meant, a peace to be entered into by distinct states, now at war; and his majesty has given your lordship powers to treat with us of such a peace, I may venture to say, though without authority, that I think a treaty for that purpose not quite impracticable, before we enter into foreign alliances. But I am persuaded you have no such powers. Your nation, though, by punishing those American governors who have fomented the discord, rebuilding our burnt towns, and repairing, as far as possible, the mischiefs done us, she might recover a great share of our regard, and the greatest share of our growing commerce, with all the advantages of that additional strength, to be derived from a friendship with us; yet I know too well her abounding pride and deficient wisdom, to believe she will ever take such salutary measures. Her fondness for conquest as a warlike nation; her lust of dominion as an ambitious one; and her thirst for a gainful monopoly as a commercial one (none of them legitimate causes of war), will join to hide from her eyes every view of her true interest, and continually goad her on in these ruinous distant expeditions, so destructive both of lives and of treasure, that they must prove as pernicious to her, in the end, as the Croisades formerly were to most of the nations of Europe.

I have not the vanity, my lord, to think of intimidating, by thus predicting the effects of this war; for I know it will in England have the fate of all my former predictions,—not to be believed till the event shall verify it.

Long did I endeavour, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve from breaking that fine and noble porcelain vase—the British empire; for I knew that, being once broken, the separate parts could not retain even their *share* of the strength and value that existed in the whole; and that a perfect *re-union* of those parts could scarce ever be hoped for. Your lordship may possibly remember the tears of joy that wetted my cheek, when, at your good sister's in London, you once gave me expectations, that a reconciliation might soon take place. I had the misfortune to find these expectations disappointed, and to be treated as the cause of the mischief I was labouring to prevent. My consolation, under that groundless and malevolent treatment, was, that I retained the friendship of many wise and good men in that country; and, among the rest, some share in the regard of lord Howe.

The well-founded esteem, and, permit me to say, affection, which I shall always have for your lordship, make it painful to me to see you engaged in conducting a war, the great ground of which (as described in your letter) is "the necessity of preventing the American *trade* from passing into foreign channels." To me it seems, that neither the obtaining or retaining any trade, how valuable soever, is an object for which men may justly spill each other's blood; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce are the goodness and cheapness of commodities; and that the profits of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it, and holding it by fleets and armies. I consider this war against us, therefore, as both unjust and unwise; and, I am persuaded, that cool and dispassionate posterity will condemn to infamy those who advised it; and that even success will not save from some degree of dishonour,

those who have voluntarily engaged to conduct it.

I know your great motive in coming hither was the hope of being instrumental in a reconciliation; and I believe, when you find that to be impossible, on any terms given you to propose, you will then relinquish so odious a command, and return to a more honourable private station.

With the greatest and most sincere respect, I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

LETTER XXIV.

Dr. Franklin's Letter respecting Captain Cook.

To all Captains and Commanders of armed ships acting by commission from the Congress of the United States of America, now in war with Great Britain.

Gentlemen,

A SHIP having been fitted out from England, before the commencement of this war, to make discoveries of new countries in unknown seas, under the conduct of that most celebrated navigator, Captain Cook,—an undertaking truly laudable in itself, as the increase of geographical knowledge facilitates the communication between distant nations, in the exchange of useful products and manufactures, and the extension of arts, whereby the common enjoyments of human life are multiplied and augmented, and science of other kinds increased, to the benefit of mankind in general:—This is therefore most earnestly to recommend to every one of you, that, in case the said ship, which is now expected to be soon in the European seas on her return, should happen to fall into your hands, you would not consider her as an enemy, nor suffer any plunder to be made of the effects contained in her, nor obstruct her immediate return to England, by detaining her, or sending her into any other part of Europe or America; but that you would treat the said Captain Cook and his people with all civility and kindness, affording them, as common friends to mankind, all the assistance in your power, which they may happen to stand in need of. In so doing you will not only gratify the generosity of your own dispositions, but there is no doubt of your obtaining the approbation of the congress, and your own American owners.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen, your most obedient, &c.

B. FRANKLIN,

Minister plenipotentiary from the congress of the United States to the court of France.

At Passy, near Paris, this 10th day of March, 1779.

LETTER XXV.

Dr. Franklin to George Whatley, Esq. Treasurer of the Foundling Hospital, London.

Passy, near Paris, Aug. 21, 1784.

My dear old friend,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of May 3, 1783. I am ashamed that it has been so long unanswered. The indolence of old age, frequent indisposition, and too much business, are my only excuses. I had great pleasure in reading it, as it informed me of your welfare.

Your excellent little work, "The Principles of Trade," is too little known. I wish you would send me a copy of it by the bearer, my grandson and secretary, whom I beg leave to recommend to your civilities. I would get it translated and printed here; and, if your bookseller has any quantity of them left, I should be glad he would send them to America. The ideas of our people there, though rather better than those that

prevail in Europe, are not so good as they should be: and that piece might be of service among them.

Since, and soon after the date of your letter, we lost, unaccountably, as well as unfortunately, that worthy, valuable young man you mention, your namesake Maddeson. He was infinitely regretted by all that knew him.

I am sorry your favourite charity does not go on as you could wish it. It is shrunk, indeed, by your admitting only sixty children in a year. What you have told your brethren respecting America is true. If you find it difficult to dispose of your children in England, it looks as if you had too many people. And yet you are afraid of emigration. A subscription is lately set on foot here to encourage and assist mothers in nursing their infants themselves at home; the practice of sending them to the *Enfans Trouvés* having risen here to a monstrous excess, as by the annual bills it appears they amount to near one third of the children born in Paris. This subscription is likely to succeed, and may do a great deal of good, though it cannot answer all the purposes of a foundling hospital.

Your eyes must continue very good, since you are able to write so small a hand without spectacles. I cannot distinguish a letter, even of large print; but am happy in the invention of double spectacles, which, serving for distant objects as well as near ones, make my eyes as useful to me as ever they were. If all the other defects and infirmities of old age could be as easily and cheaply remedied, it would be worth while, my friend, to live a good deal longer. But I look upon death to be as necessary to our constitutions as sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the morning.—Adieu; and believe me, ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

LETTER XXVI.

Dr. Franklin to George Whatley, Esq.

Passy, May 19, 1785.

Dear old friend,

I RECEIVED the very good letter you sent me by my grandson, together with your resemblance, which is placed in my chamber, and gives me great pleasure. There is no trade, they say, without returns; and therefore I am punctual in making those you have ordered. I intended this should have been a long epistle; but I am interrupted, and can only add, that I am, ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

My grandson presents his most affectionate respects.

LETTER XXVII.

Dr. Franklin to George Whatley, Esq.

Passy, May 23, 1785.

Dear old friend,

I SENT you a few lines the other day with the medallion, when I should have written more, but was prevented by the coming in of a *bavard*, who worried me till evening. I bore with him, and now you are to bear with me; for I shall, probably, *bavarder* in answering your letter.

I am not acquainted with the saying of Alphonsus, which you allude to as a sanctification of your rigidity in refusing to allow me the plea of old age as an excuse for my want of exactitude in correspondence. What was that saying?—You do not, it seems, feel any occasion for such an excuse, though you are, as you say, rising 75; but I am rising (perhaps more properly falling) 80; and I leave the excuse with you till you arrive at that age: perhaps you may then be more sensible of its validity, and see fit to use it for yourself.

I must agree with you, that the gout is bad, and that the stone is worse. I am happy in not having them both together, and I join in your prayer, that you may live till you die without either. But I doubt the author of the epitaph you sent me is a little mistaken, when, speaking of the world, he says, that

——— He ne'er cared a pin
What they said, or may say, of the mortal within.

It is so natural to wish to be well spoken of, whether alive or dead, that I imagine he could not be quite exempt from that desire, and that, at least, he wished to be thought a wit, or he would not have given himself the trouble of writing so good an epitaph to leave behind him. Was it not worthy of his care, that the world should say he was an honest and a good man? I like better the concluding sentiment in the old song, called the Old Man's Wish, wherein, after wishing for a warm house, in a country town, an easy horse, some good old authors, ingenious and cheerful companions, pudding on Sundays, with stout ale and a bottle of Burgundy, &c. &c. in separate stanzas, each ending with this burden,

May I govern my passions with absolute sway,
And grow wiser and better as strength wears away,
Without gout or stone, by a gentle decay—

he adds, for the last stanza,

With courage undaunted may I face my last day,
And when I am gone may the better sort say,
In the morning when sober, in the evening when mellow,
He's gone—and not left behind him his fellow,
For he govern'd his passions, &c.

What signifies our wishing! Things happen, after all, as they will happen. I have sung that *wishing song* a thousand times, when I was young; and now find, at fourscore, that the three contraries have befallen me, being subject to the gout, and the stone, and not being yet master of all my passions. Like the proud girl in my country, who wished and resolved not to marrry a parson, nor a Presbyterian, nor an Irishman, and at length found herself married to an Irish, Presbyterian parson! You see I have some reason to wish that, in a future state, I may not only be *as well as I was*, but a little better. And I hope it: for I too, with your poet, *trust in God.* And when I observe, that there is great frugality as well as wisdom in his works, since he has been evidently sparing, both of labour and materials; for, by the various wonderful inventions of propagation, he has provided for the continual peopling his world with plants and animals without being at the trouble of repeated new creations; and by the natural reduction of compound substances to their original elements, capable of being employed in new compositions, he has prevented the necessity of creating new matter; for that the earth, water, air, and perhaps fire, which being compounded, form wood, do, when the wood is dissolved, return, and again become air, earth, fire, and water:—I say, that when I see nothing annihilated, and not even a drop of water wasted, I cannot suspect the annihilation of souls, or believe that he will suffer the daily waste of millions of minds ready made, that now exist, and put himself to the continual trouble of making new ones. Thus, finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall, in some shape or other, always exist. And, with all the inconveniences human *life* is liable to, I shall not object to a new edition of mine; hoping, however, that the errata of the last may be corrected.

I return your note of children received in the foundling hospital at Paris, from 1741 to 1755 inclusive, and I have added the years preceding, as far back as 1710, together with the general christenings of the city; and the years succeeding down to

1770. Those since that period I have not been able to obtain. I have noted in the margin the gradual increase, viz. from every tenth child so thrown upon the public, till it comes to every third. Fifteen years have passed since the last account, and probably it may now amount to one half. Is it right to encourage this monstrous deficiency of natural affection? A surgeon I met with here excused the women of Paris, by saying seriously, that they *could not* give suck,—*Car, dit-il, ils n'ont point de tetons.* He assured me it was a fact, and bade me look at them, and observe how flat they were on the breast. They have nothing more there, says he, than I have upon the back of my hand. I have since thought that there might be some truth in his observation, and that possibly Nature, finding they made no use of bubbies, has left off giving them any. Yet, since Rousseau, with admirable eloquence, pleaded for the rights of children to their mother's milk, the mode has changed a little, and some ladies of quality now suckle their infants, and find milk enough. May the mode descend to the lower ranks, till it becomes no longer the custom to pack their infants away, as soon as born, to the *Enfans Trouvés*, with the careless observation, that the king is better able to maintain them. I am credibly informed, that nine-tenths of them die there pretty soon; which is said to be a great relief to the institution, whose funds would not otherwise be sufficient to bring up the remainder. Except the few persons of quality above-mentioned, and the multitude who send to the hospital, the practice is to hire nurses in the country, to carry out the children, and take care of them there. Here is an office for examining the health of nurses and giving them licenses. They come to town on certain days of the week, in companies, to receive the children; and we often meet trains of them on the road, returning to the neighbouring villages with each a child in arms. But those who are good enough to try this way of raising their children, are often not able to pay the expense; so that the prisons of Paris are crowded with wretched fathers and mothers confined *pour mois de nourice;* though it is laudably a favourite charity to pay for them, and set such prisoners at liberty. I wish success to the new project of assisting the poor to keep their children at home, because I think there is no nurse like a mother (or not many;) and that, if parents did not immediately send their infants out of their sight, they would in a few days begin to love them, and thence be spurred to greater industry for their maintenance. This is a subject you understand better than I, and therefore, having perhaps said too much, I drop it. I only add to the notes a remark from the History of the Academy of Sciences, much in favour of the foundling institution.

The Philadelphia bank goes on, as I hear, very well. What you call the Cincinnati institution is no institution of our government, but a private convention among the officers of our late army, and so universally disliked by the people, that it is supposed it will be dropped. It was considered as an attempt to establish something like an hereditary rank or nobility. I hold with you, that it was wrong. May I add, that all descending honours are wrong and absurd; that the honour of virtuous actions appertains only to him that performs them, and is in its nature incommunicable. If it were communicable by descent, it must also be divisible among the descendants; and the more ancient the family, the less would be found existing in any one branch of it; to say nothing of the greater chance of unlucky interruptions.

Our constitution seems not to be well understood with you. If the congress were a permanent body, there would be more reason in being jealous of giving it powers. But its members are chosen annually, and cannot be chosen more than three years successively, nor more than three years in seven, and any of them may be recalled at any time, whenever their constituents shall be dissatisfied with their conduct. They are of the people, and return again to mix with the people, having no more durable pre-eminence than the different grains of sand in an hour-glass. Such an assembly cannot easily become dangerous to liberty. They are the servants of the people, sent together to do the people's business, and promote the public welfare: their powers must be sufficient, or their duties cannot be performed. They have no profitable appointments, but a mere payment of daily wages, such as are scarcely equivalent to their expenses; so that, having no chance for great places and enormous salaries or pensions, as in some countries, there is no briguing or bribing for elections. I wish Old England were as happy in its government; but I do not see it. Your people, however, think their constitution the best in the world, and affect to despise ours. It is comfortable to have a good opinion of one's self, and of every thing that belongs to us; to think one's own religion, king, and wife, the best of all possible wives, kings, and religions. I remember three Greenlanders, who had travelled two years in Europe, under the care of some Moravian missionaries, and had visited Germany, Denmark, Holland, and England, when I asked them at Philadelphia (when they were in their way home) whether, now they had seen how much more commodiously the white people lived by the help of the arts, they would not choose to remain among us—their answer was, that they were pleased with having had an opportunity of seeing many fine things, *but they chose to live in their own country:* which country, by the way, consisted of rock only; for the Moravians were obliged to carry earth in their ship from New York, for the purpose of making there a cabbage garden!

By Mr. Dollond's saying that my double spectacles could only serve particular eyes, I doubt he has not been rightly informed of their construction. I imagine it will be found pretty generally true, that the same convexity of glass, through which a man sees clearest and best at the distance proper for reading, is not the best for greater distances. I therefore had formerly two pair of spectacles, which I shifted occasionally; as in travelling I sometimes read, and often want to regard the prospects. Finding this change troublesome, and not always sufficiently ready, I had the glasses cut out, and half of each kind associated in the same circle, the least convex, for distant objects, the upper half, and the most convex, for reading, the lower half. By this means, as I wear my spectacles constantly, I have only to move my eyes up or down, as I want to see distinctly far or near, the proper glasses being always ready. This I find more particularly convenient since my being in France; the glasses that serve me best at table, to see what I eat, being the best to see the faces of those on the other side of the table who speak to me; and, when one's ears are not well accustomed to the sounds of a language, a sight of the movements in the features of him that speaks helps to explain; so that I understand French better by the help of my spectacles.

My intended translator of your piece, the only one I know who understands *the subject*, as well as the

two languages,—which a translator ought to do, or he cannot make so good a translation,—is at present occupied in an affair that prevents his undertaking it; but that will soon be over.—I thank you for the notes. I should be glad to have another of the printed pamphlets.

We shall always be ready to take your children, if you send them to us. I only wonder, that, since London draws to itself and consumes such numbers of your country people, your country should not, to supply their places, want, and willingly receive, the children you have to dispose of. That circumstance, together with the multitude who voluntarily part with their freedom as men, to serve for a time as lackeys, or for life as soldiers, in consideration of small wages, seems to me a proof that your island is over-peopled; and yet it is afraid of emigrations! Adieu, my dear friend; and believe me, ever, yours very affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

LETTER XXVIII.

Dr. Franklin to George Whatley, Esq.

Philadelphia, May 13, 1787.

I RECEIVED duly my good old friend's letter of the 19th of February, with a copy of one from Mr. Williams, to whom I shall communicate it when I see him, which I expect soon to do. He is generally a punctual correspondent, and I am surprised you have not heard from him.

I thank you much for your notes on banks; they are just and solid, as far as I can judge of them. Our bank here has met with great opposition, partly from envy, and partly from those who wish an emission of more paper-money, which they think the bank influence prevents. But it has stood all attacks, and went on well, notwithstanding the assembly repealed its charter; a new assembly has restored it; and the management is so prudent, that I have no doubt of its continuing to go on well. The dividend has never been less than six per cent., nor will that be augmented for some time, as the surplus profit is reserved to face accidents. The dividend of eleven per cent., which was once made, was from a circumstance scarce avoidable. A new company was proposed, and prevented only by admitting a number of new partners. As many of the first set were averse to this, and chose to withdraw, it was necessary to settle their accounts; so all were adjusted, the profits shared that had been accumulated, and the new and old proprietors jointly began on a new and equal footing. Their notes are always instantly paid on demand, and pass on all occasions as readily as silver, because they will always produce silver.

Your medallion is in good company; it is placed with those of lord Chatham, lord Camden, Marquis of Rockingham, sir George Savil, and some others, who honoured me with a share of friendly regard when in England. I believe I have thanked you for it, but I thank you again.

I believe, with you, that if our plenipotentiary is desirous of concluding a treaty of commerce, he may need patience. But, if I were in his place, and not otherwise instructed, I should be apt to say, Take your own time, gentlemen. If the treaty cannot be made as much to your advantage as to ours, don't make it. I am sure the want of it is not more to our disadvantage than to yours. Let the merchants on both sides treat with one another. *Laissez les faire.*

I have never considered attentively the congress scheme for coining, and I have it not now at hand; so that at present I can say nothing to it. The chief uses of coining seem to be, ascertaining the fineness of the

metals, and saving the time that would otherwise be spent in weighing to ascertain the quantity. But the convenience of fixed values to pieces is so great as to force the currency of some whose stamp is worn off, that should have assured their fineness, and which are evidently not of half their due weight: this is the case at present with the sixpences in England, which, one with another, do not weigh three-pence.

You are now 78, and I am 82. You tread fast upon my heels: but, though you have more strength and spirit, you cannot come up with me till I stop; which must now be soon; for I am grown so old as to have buried most of the friends of my youth; and I now often hear persons, whom I knew when children, called *old* Mr. such a one, to distinguish them from their sons, now men grown, and in business; so that, by living twelve years beyond *David's* period, I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity, when I ought to have been a-bed and asleep. Yet, had I gone at 70, it would have cut off twelve of the most active years of my life, employed, too, in matters of the greatest importance: but whether I have been doing good or mischief, is for time to discover: I only know that I intended well, and I hope all will end well.

Be so good as to present my affectionate respects to Dr. Rowley. I am under great obligations to him, and shall write to him shortly. It will be a pleasure to him to hear that my malady does not grow sensibly worse; and that is a great point: for it has always been so tolerable, as not to prevent my enjoying the pleasures of society, and being cheerful in conversation. I owe this, in a great measure, to his good counsels. Adieu, my dear friend; and believe me, ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

LETTER XXIX.

Dr. Price to a Gentleman in America.

Hackney, June 19, 1790.

Dear sir,

I AM hardly able to tell you how kindly I take the letters with which you favour me. Your last, containing an account of the death of our excellent friend, Dr. Franklin, and the circumstances attending it, deserves my particular gratitude. The account which he has left of his life will show, in a striking example, how a man, by talents, industry, and integrity, may rise from obscurity to the first eminence and consequence in the world; but it brings his history no lower than the year 1757, and I understand, that since he sent over the copy, which I have read, he has been able to make no additions to it. It is with a melancholy regret I think of his death; but to death we are all bound by the irreversible order of nature; and in looking forward to it, there is comfort in being able to reflect, that we have not lived in vain, and that all the useful and virtuous shall meet in a better country beyond the grave.

Dr. Franklin, in the last letter I received from him, after mentioning his age and infirmities, observes, that it has been kindly ordered by the Author of nature, that, as we draw nearer the conclusion of life, we are furnished with more helps to wean us from it, among which one of the strongest is the loss of dear friends. I was delighted with the account you gave in your letter of the honour shown to his memory at Philadelphia, and by congress; and yesterday I received a high additional pleasure, by being informed, that the national assembly of France had determined to go into mourning for him.—What a glorious scene is opened there! The annals of the world furnish no parallel to it. One of the honours

of our departed friend is, that he has contributed much to it. I am, with great respect, your obliged and very humble servant, RICHARD PRICE.

LETTER XXX.

Thomas Jefferson, Esq. to Dr. William Smith of Philadelphia.

I FEEL both the wish and the duty to communicate, in compliance with your request, whatever, within my knowledge, might render justice to the memory of our great countryman, Dr. Franklin, in whom philosophy has to deplore one of its principal luminaries extinguished. But my opportunities of knowing the interesting facts of his life have not been equal to my desire of making them known.

I can only, therefore, testify, in general, that there appeared to me more respect and veneration attached to the character of Dr. Franklin in France, than to that of any other person in the same country, foreign or native. I had opportunities of knowing particularly, how far these sentiments were felt by the foreign ambassadors and ministers at the court of Versailles. The fable of his capture by the Algerines, propagated by the English newspapers, excited no uneasiness, as it was seen at once to be a dish cooked up to please certain readers; but nothing could exceed the anxiety of his diplomatic brethren on a subsequent report of his death, which, although premature, bore some marks of authenticity.

I found the ministers of France equally impressed with his talents and integrity. The count de Vergennes, particularly, gave me repeated and unequivocal demonstrations of his entire confidence in him.

When he left Passy, it seemed as if the village had lost its patriarch. On taking leave of the court, which he did by letter, the king ordered him to be handsomely complimented, and furnished him with a litter and mules of his own, the only kind of conveyance the state of his health could bear.

The succession to Dr. Franklin, at the court of France, was an excellent school of humility to me. On being presented to any one, as the minister of America, the commonplace question was, "*C'est vous monsieur, qui remplacez le Docteur Franklin?*"—Is it you, sir, who replace Dr. Franklin? I generally answered—"No one can replace him, sir; I am only his successor."

I could here relate a number of those *bon mots*, with which he was used to charm every society, as having heard many of them; but these are not your object. Particulars of greater dignity happened not to occur, during his stay of nine months after my arrival in France.

A little before that time, Argand had invented his celebrated lamp, in which the flame is spread into a hollow cylinder, and thus brought into contact with the air, within as well as without. Dr. Franklin had been on the point of the same discovery. The idea had occurred to him; but he had tried a bulrush as a wick, which did not succeed. His occupations did not permit him to repeat and extend his trials to the introduction of a larger column of air than could pass through the stem of a bulrush.

About that time, also, the king of France gave him a signal testimony of respect, by joining him with some of the most illustrious men of the nation, to examine that ignis-fatuus of philosophy, the animal magnetism of the maniac Mesmer; the pretended effects of which had astonished all Paris. From Dr. Franklin's hand, in conjunction with his brethren of the learned committee, that compound of fraud and folly was un-

veiled, and received its death-wound. After this nothing very interesting was before the public, either in philosophy or politics, during his stay; and he was principally occupied in winding up his affairs, and preparing for his return to America.

These small offerings to the memory of our great and dear friend (whom time will be making still greater, while it is spunging us from its records) must be accepted by you, sir, in that spirit of love and veneration for him, in which they are made; and not according to their insignificancy in the eyes of a world, which did not want this mite to fill up the measure of his worth.

His death was an affliction, which was to happen to us at some time or other. We have reason to be thankful he was so long spared; that the most useful life should be the longest also; that it was protracted so far beyond the ordinary span allotted to humanity, as to avail us of his wisdom and virtue, in the establishment of our freedom in the west; and to bless him with a view of its dawn in the east, where men seemed till now to have learned every thing—but *how to be free.*

LETTER XXXI.

*Dr. Joseph Priestley to the Editor of the Monthly Magazine.**

Northumberland, Nov. 10, 1802.

Sir,

I HAVE just read in the Monthly Review, vol. 36, p. 357, that the late Mr. Pennant said of Dr. Franklin, that, "living under the protection of our mild government, he was secretly playing the incendiary, and too successfully inflaming the minds of our fellow subjects in America, till that great explosion happened, which for ever disunited us from our once happy colonies."

As it is in my power, as far as my testimony will be regarded, to refute this charge, I think it due to our friendship to do it. It is probable, that no person now living was better acquainted with Dr. Franklin, and his sentiments on all subjects of importance, than myself, for several years before the American war. I think I knew him as well as one man can generally know another. At that time I spent the winters in London, in the family of the Marquis of Landsdown, and few days passed without my seeing more or less of Dr. Franklin; and the last day that he passed in England, having given out that he should depart the day before, we spent together, without any interruption, from morning till night.

Now, he was so far from wishing for a rupture with the colonies, that he did more than most men would have done to prevent it. His constant advice to his countrymen, he always said, was "to bear every thing from England, however unjust;" saying, that "it could not last long, as they would soon outgrow all their hardships." On this account, Dr. Price, who then corresponded with some of the principal persons in America, said, he began to be very unpopular there. He always said, "If there must be a war, it will be a war of ten years, and I shall not live to see the end of it." This I have heard him say many times.

It was at his request, enforced by that of Dr. Fothergil, that I wrote an anonymous pamphlet, calculated to show the injustice and impolicy of a war with the colonies, previous to the meeting of a new parliament. As I then lived at Leeds, he corrected the press himself; and to a passage, in which I lamented the attempt to establish arbitrary power in so large a part of the British empire, he added the following clause, "to the imminent

* Inserted in the number for February, 1803.

danger of our most valuable commerce, and of that national strength, security, and felicity, which depend on union and on liberty."

The unity of the British empire, in all its parts, was a favourite idea of his. He used to compare it to a beautiful China vase, which, if once broken, could never be put together again: and so great an admirer was he, at the time, of the British constitution, that, he said he saw no inconvenience from its being extended over a great part of the globe. With these sentiments he left England; but when, on his arrival in America, he found the war begun, and that there was no receding, no man entered more warmly into the interests of what he then considered as *his country*, in opposition to that of Great Britain. Three of his letters to me, one written immediately on his landing, and published in the collection of his Miscellaneous Works, p. 365, 552, and 555, will prove this.

By many persons, Dr. Franklin is considered as having been a cold-hearted man, so callous to every feeling of humanity, that the prospect of all the horrors of a civil war could not affect him. This was far from being the case. A great part of the day above-mentioned, that we spent together, he was looking over a number of American newspapers, directing me what to extract from them for the English ones; and in reading them, he was frequently not able to proceed for the tears literally running down his cheeks. To strangers he was cold and reserved; but, where he was intimate, no man indulged in more pleasantry and good humour. By this he was the delight of a club, to which he alludes in one of the letters above referred to, called the *whig-club*, that met at the London coffee-house, of which Dr. Price, Dr. Kippis, Mr. John Lee, and others of the same stamp, were members.

Hoping that this vindication of Dr. Franklin will give pleasure to many of your readers, I shall proceed to relate some particulars relating to his behaviour, when lord Loughborough, then Mr. Wedderburn, pronounced his violent invective against him at the privy-council, on his presenting the complaints of the province of Massachusetts (I think it was) against their governor. Some of the particulars may be thought amusing.

On the morning of the day on which the cause was to be heard, I met Mr. Burke, in Parliament-street, accompanied by Dr. Douglas, afterwards bishop of Carlisle; and, after introducing us to each other, as men of letters, he asked me whither I was going. I said I could tell him where I *wished* to go. He then asked me where that was. I said, to the privy-council, but that I was afraid I could not get admission. He then desired me to go along with him. Accordingly I did; but, when we got into the anti-room, we found it quite filled with persons as desirous of getting admission as ourselves. Seeing this, I said we should never get through the crowd. He said, "Give me your arm;" and, locking it fast in his, he soon made his way to the door of the privy-council. I then said, Mr. Burke, you are an excellent leader; he replied, "I wish other persons thought so too."

After waiting a short time, the door of the privy-council opened, and we entered the first; when Mr. Burke took his stand behind the first chair next to the president, and I behind that the next to his. When the business was opened, it was sufficiently evident, from the speech of Mr. Wedderburn, who was counsel for the governor, that the real object of the court was to insult Dr. Franklin. All this time he stood in a corner of the room, not far from me, without the least apparent emotion.

Mr. Dunning, who was the leading counsel on the part of the colony,

was so hoarse, that he could hardly make himself heard; and Mr. Lee, who was the second, spoke but feebly in reply; so that Mr. Wedderburn had a complete triumph. At the sallies of his sarcastic wit, all the members of the council, the president himself (lord Gower) not excepted, frequently laughed outright. No person belonging to the council behaved with decent gravity, except lord North, who, coming late, took his stand behind the chair opposite to me.

When the business was over, Dr. Franklin, in going out, took me by the hand, in a manner that indicated some feeling. I soon followed him, and, going through the anti-room, saw Mr. Wedderburn there surrounded with a circle of his friends and admirers. Being known to him, he stepped forwards as if to speak to me; but I turned aside, and made what haste I could out of the place.

The next morning I breakfasted with the doctor, when he said, "He had never before been so sensible of the power of a good conscience; for that, if he had not considered the thing, for which he had been so much insulted, as one of the best actions of his life, and what he should certainly do again in the same circumstances, he could not have supported it." He was accused of clandestinely procuring certain letters, containing complaints against the governor, and sending them to America, with a view to excite their animosity against him, and thus to embroil the two countries. But he assured me, that he did not even know that such letters existed, till they were brought to him as agent for the colony, in order to be sent to his constituents; and the cover of the letters, on which the direction had been written, being lost, he only guessed at the person to whom they were addressed, by the contents.

That Dr. Franklin, notwithstanding he did not show it at the time, was much impressed by the business of the privy-council, appeared from this circumstance: when he attended there, he was dressed in a suit of Manchester velvet; and Silas Deane told me, that, when they met at Paris to sign the treaty between France and America, he purposely put on that suit.

Hoping that this communication will be of some service to the memory of Dr. Franklin, and gratify his friends, I am, sir, yours, &c.

J. PRIESTLEY.

LETTER XXXII.

Gen. Washington to the President of Congress.

Camp at Cambridge, July 10, 1775.

Sir,

I ARRIVED safe at this place on the third instant, after a journey attended with a good deal of fatigue, and retarded by necessary attentions to the successive civilities which accompanied me in my whole route.

Upon my arrival, I immediately visited the several posts occupied by our troops; and, as soon as the weather permitted, reconnoitred those of the enemy. I found the latter strongly intrenched on Bunker's Hill, about a mile from Charlestown, and advanced about half a mile from the place of the late action, with their sentries extended about one hundred and fifty yards on this side of the narrowest part of the neck leading from this place to Charlestown. Three floating batteries lie in Mystic River near their camp, and one twenty-gun ship below the ferry place between Boston and Charlestown. They have also a battery on Copp's Hill, on the Boston side, which much annoyed our troops in the late attack. Upon the neck, they have also deeply intrenched and fortified. Their advanced guards, till last Saturday morning, occupied Brown's houses, about a mile from Roxbury meeting-house, and twenty roods from their

lines: but, at that time, a party from general Thomas's camp, surprised the guard, drove them in, and burned the houses. The bulk of their army, commanded by general Howe, lies on Bunker's Hill, and the remainder on Roxbury neck, except the light horse, and a few men, in the town of Boston.

On our side, we have thrown up intrenchments on Winter and Prospect Hills, the enemy's camp in full view, at the distance of little more than a mile. Such intermediate points as would admit a landing, I have, since my arrival, taken care to strengthen, down to Sewal's Farm, where a strong intrenchment has been thrown up. At Roxbury, general Thomas has thrown up a strong work on the hill, about two hundred yards above the meeting house; which, with the brokenness of the ground, and a great number of rocks, has made that pass very secure. The troops raised in New Hampshire, with a regiment from Rhode Island, occupy Winter Hill: a part of those from Connecticut, under general Putnam, are on Prospect Hill. The troops in this town are entirely of the Massachusetts: the remainder of the Rhode Island men are at Sewal's Farm. Two regiments of Connecticut, and nine of the Massachusetts, are at Roxbury. The residue of the army, to the number of about seven hundred, are posted in several small towns along the coast, to prevent the depredations of the enemy.

Upon the whole, I think myself authorized to say, that, considering the great extent of line, and the nature of the ground, we are as well secured as could be expected in so short a time, and under the disadvantages we labour. These consist in a want of engineers, to construct proper works, and direct the men, a want of tools, and a sufficient number of men to man the works in case of an attack. You will observe, by the proceedings of the council of war, which I have the honour to enclose, that it is our unanimous opinion, to hold and defend these works as long as possible.

The discouragement it would give the men, and its contrary effects on the ministerial troops, thus to abandon our encampment in their face, formed with so much labour,—added to the certain destruction of a considerable and valuable extent of country, and our uncertainty of finding a place in all respects so capable of making a stand,—are leading reasons for this determination. At the same time, we are very sensible of the difficulties which attend the defence of lines of so great extent, and the dangers which may ensue from such a division of the army.

My earnest wish to comply with the instructions of the Congress, in making an early and complete return of the state of the army, has led into an involuntary delay of addressing you; which has given me much concern. Having given orders for this purpose immediately on my arrival, and unapprized of the imperfect obedience which had been paid to those of the like nature from general Ward, I was led, from day to day, to expect they would come in, and therefore detained the messenger. They are not now so complete as I could wish: but much allowance is to be made for inexperience in forms, and a liberty which had been taken (not given) on this subject. These reasons, I flatter myself, will no longer exist; and, of consequence, more regularity and exactness will in future prevail. This, with a necessary attention to the lines, the movements of the ministerial troops, and our immediate security, must be my apology; which I beg you to lay before Congress with the utmost duty and respect.

We labour under great disadvantages for want of tents: for, though they have been helped out by a col-

lection of now useless sails from the sea-port towns, the number is far short of our necessities. The colleges and houses of this town are necessarily occupied by the troops; which affords another reason for keeping our present situation. But I most sincerely wish the whole army was properly provided to take the field, as I am well assured, that (besides greater expedition and activity in case of alarm) it would highly conduce to health and discipline. As materials are not to be had here, I would beg leave to recommend the procuring a farther supply from Philadelphia, as soon as possible.

I should be extremely deficient in gratitude, as well as justice, if I did not take the first opportunity to acknowledge the readiness and attention, which the provincial Congress and different committees have shewn, to make every thing as convenient and agreeable as possible. But there is a vital and inherent principle of delay, incompatible with military service, in transacting business through such numerous and different channels. I esteem it therefore my duty to represent the inconvenience which must unavoidably ensue from a dependence on a number of persons for supplies; and submit it to the consideration of Congress, whether the public service will not be best promoted by appointing a commissary-general for these purposes. We have a striking instance of the preference of such a mode, in the establishment of Connecticut, as their troops are extremely well provided under the direction of Mr. Trumbull; and he has at different times assisted others with various articles. Should my sentiments happily coincide with those of your honours on this subject, I beg leave to recommend Mr. Trumbull as a very proper person for this department. In the arrangement of troops, collected under such circumstances, and upon the spur of immediate necessity, several appointments are omitted, which appear to be indispensably necessary for the good government of the army—particularly a quarter-master-general, a commissary of musters, and a commissary of artillery. These I must earnestly recommend to the notice and provision of the Congress.

I find myself already much embarrassed, for want of a military chest. These embarrassments will increase every day: I must, therefore, request that money may be forwarded as soon as possible. The want of this most necessary article will, I fear, produce great inconveniences, if not prevented by an early attention. I find the army in general, and the troops raised in Massachusetts in particular, very deficient in necessary clothing. Upon inquiry, there appears no probability of obtaining any supplies in this quarter: and, on the best consideration of this matter I am able to form, I am of opinion, that a number of hunting shirts (not less than ten thousand) would, in a great degree, remove this difficulty, in the cheapest and quickest manner. I know nothing, in a speculative view, more trivial, yet, if put in practice, would have a happier tendency to unite the men, and abolish those provincial distinctions which lead to jealousy and dissatisfaction.

In a former part of this letter, I mentioned the want of engineers. I can hardly express the disappointment I have experienced on this subject,—the skill of those we have being very imperfect, and confined to the mere manual exercise of cannon; whereas the war in which we are engaged requires a knowledge comprehending the duties of the field, and fortification. If any persons thus qualified are to be found in the southern colonies, it would be of great public service to forward them with all expedition.

Upon the article of ammunition, I must re-echo the former complaints on this subject. We are so exceedingly destitute, that our artillery will be of little use without a supply, both large and seasonable. What we have must be reserved for the small arms, and that managed with the utmost frugality. * * *

The state of the army you will find ascertained with tolerable precision in the returns which accompany this letter. Upon finding the number of men to fall so far short of the establishment, and below all expectation, I immediately called a council of the general officers, whose opinion (as to the mode of filling up the regiments, and providing for the present exigency) I have the honour of enclosing, together with the best judgment we are able to form of the ministerial troops. From the number of boys, deserters, and negroes, that have been enlisted in the troops of this province, I entertain some doubts whether the number required can be raised here: and all the general officers agree, that no dependence can be put on the militia, for a continuance in camp, or regularity and discipline during the short time they may stay. This unhappy and devoted province has been so long in a state of anarchy, and the yoke * * * * * been laid so heavily on it, that great allowances are to be made for troops raised under such circumstances. The deficiency of numbers, discipline, and stores, can only lead to this conclusion, that their spirit has exceeded their strength. But, at the same time, I would humbly submit to the consideration of Congress, the propriety of making some further provision of men from the other colonies. If these regiments should be completed to their establishment, the dismission of those unfit for duty, on account of their age and character, would occasion a considerable reduction; and, at all events, they have been enlisted upon such terms, that they may be disbanded when other troops arrive. But, should my apprehensions be realized, and the regiments here be not filled up, the public cause would suffer by an absolute dependence upon so doubtful an event, unless some provision is made against such a disappointment.

It requires no military skill, to judge of the difficulty of introducing proper discipline and subordination into an army while we have the enemy in view, and are in daily expectation of an attack: but it is of so much importance, that every effort will be made, which time and circumstances will admit. In the mean time, I have a sincere pleasure in observing, that there are materials for a good army—a great number of able-bodied men, active, zealous in the cause, and of unquestionable courage.

I am now, sir, to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the twenty-eighth, enclosing the resolutions of Congress, of the twenty-seventh ultimo, and a copy of a letter from the committee of Albany; to all which I shall pay due attention.

Generals Gates and Sullivan have both arrived in good health.

My best abilities are at all times devoted to the service of my country: but I feel the weight, importance, and variety of my present duties too sensibly, not to wish a more immediate and frequent communication with the Congress. I fear it may often happen, in the course of our present operations, that I shall need that assistance and direction from them, which time and distance will not allow me to receive.

Since writing the above, I have also to acknowledge your favour of the fourth instant by Fessenden, and the receipt of the commissions, and articles of war. The former are yet eight hundred short of the number required. This deficiency you will

please to supply as soon as you conveniently can. Among the other returns, I have also sent one of our killed, wounded, and missing, in the late action; but have been able to procure no certain account of the loss of the ministerial troops. My best intelligence fixes it at above five hundred killed, and six or seven hundred wounded: but it is no more than conjecture,—the utmost pains being taken on their side to conceal it.—I have the honour to be, &c.

G. W.

LETTER XXXIII.

Gen. Washington to the President of Congress.

Cambridge, Feb. 9, 1776.

Sir,

THE purport of this letter will be directed to a single object: through you, I mean to lay it before Congress; and, at the same time that I beg their serious attention to the subject, to ask pardon for intruding an opinion, not only unasked, but, in some measure, repugnant to their resolves.

The disadvantages attending the limited enlistment of troops are too apparent to those who are eye-witnesses of them to render any animadversions necessary: but to gentlemen at a distance, whose attention is engrossed by a thousand important objects, the case may be otherwise.

That this cause precipitated the fate of the brave and much-to-be-lamented general Montgomery, and brought on the defeat which followed thereupon, I have not the most distant doubt: for, had he not been apprehensive of the troops leaving him at so important a crisis, but continued the blockade of Quebec, a capitulation (from the best accounts I have been able to collect) must inevitably have followed. And that we were not, at one time, obliged to dispute these lines under disadvantageous circumstances (proceeding from the same cause, to wit, the troops disbanding of themselves before the militia could be got in) is to me a matter of wonder and astonishment, and proves that general Howe was either unacquainted with our situation, or restrained by his instructions from putting any thing to a hazard till his reinforcements should arrive.

The instance of general Montgomery (I mention it because it is a striking one; for a number of others might be adduced) proves, that, instead of having men to take advantage of circumstances, you are in a manner compelled, right or wrong, to make circumstances yield to a secondary consideration. Since the first of December, I have been devising every means in my power to secure these encampments; and, though I am sensible that we never have, since that period, been able to act upon the offensive, and, at times, not in a condition to defend; yet the cost of marching home one set of men,—bringing in another,—the havoc and waste occasioned by the first,—the repairs necessary for the second,—with a thousand incidental charges and inconveniences which have arisen, and which it is scarce possible either to recollect or describe,—amount to near as much as the keeping up a respectable body of troops the whole time, ready for any emergency, would have done. To this may be added, that you never can have a well-disciplined army. To bring men well acquainted with the duties of a soldier, requires time. To bring them under proper discipline and subordination, not only requires time, but is a work of great difficulty; and, in this army, where there is so little distinction between the officers and soldiers, requires an uncommon degree of attention. To expect, then, the same service from raw and undisciplined recruits as from veteran soldiers, is to expect what never did, and, perhaps, never

will happen. Men who are familiarized to danger meet it without shrinking: whereas those who have never seen service often apprehend danger where no danger is. Three things prompt men to a regular discharge of their duty in time of action—natural bravery, hope of reward, and fear of punishment. The two first are common to the untutored and the disciplined soldier: but the latter most obviously distinguishes the one from the other. A coward, when taught to believe, that, if he breaks his ranks and abandons his colours, he will be punished with death by his own party, will take his chance against the enemy: but a man, who thinks little of the one, and is fearful of the other, acts from present feelings, regardless of consequences.

Again, men of a day's standing will not look forward; and from experience we find, that, as the time approaches for their discharge, they grow careless of their arms, ammunition, camp utensils, &c.; nay, even the barracks themselves have felt uncommon marks of wanton depredation, and lay us under fresh trouble and additional expense in providing for every fresh set, when we find it next to impossible to procure such articles as are absolutely necessary in the first instance. To this may be added the seasoning which new recruits must have to a camp, and the loss consequent thereupon. But this is not all. Men, engaged for a short limited time only, have the officers too much in their power: for, to obtain a degree of popularity in order to induce a second enlistment, a kind of familiarity takes place, which brings on a relaxation of discipline, unlicensed furloughs, and other indulgences, incompatible with order and good government; by which means, the latter part of the time, for which the soldier was engaged, is spent in undoing what you were aiming to inculcate in the first.

To go into an enumeration of all the evils we have experienced in this late great change of the army, and the expenses incidental to it—to say nothing of the hazard we have run, and must run, between the discharging of one army and enlistment of another, unless an enormous expense of militia is incurred—would greatly exceed the bounds of a letter. What I have already taken the liberty of saying will serve to convey a general idea of the matter; and therefore I shall, with all due deference, take the freedom to give it as my opinion, that, if the Congress have any reason to believe that there will be occasion for troops another year, and, consequently, of another enlistment, they would save money, and have infinitely better troops, if they were, even at a bounty of twenty, thirty, or more dollars, to engage the men already enlisted, (till January next,) and such others as may be wanted to complete the establishment, for and during the war. I will not undertake to say, that the men can be had upon these terms: but I am satisfied that it will never do to let the matter alone, as it was last year, till the time of service was near expiring. The hazard is too great in the first place:—in the next, the trouble and perplexity of disbanding one army, and raising another at the same instant, and in such a critical situation as the last was, is scarcely in the power of words to describe, and such as no man, who has experienced it once, will ever undergo again.

If Congress should differ from me in sentiment upon this point, I have only to beg, that they will do me the justice to believe, that I have nothing more in view than what to me appears necessary to advance the public weal, although, in the first instance, it will be attended with a capital expense;—and that I have the honour to be, &c. G. W.

LETTER XXXIV.

Gen. Washington to the President of Congress.

New York, July 11, 1776.

Sir,

I WAS honoured with your favour of the eighth instant by yesterday morning's post, with the several resolves to which you referred my attention. I shall duly regard them, and attempt their execution as far as I am able.

By virtue of the discretionary power that Congress were pleased to vest me with, and by advice of such of my general officers as I have had an opportunity of consulting, I have ordered the two remaining continental regiments in the Massachusetts Bay to march immediately for the defence of this place, in full confidence that nothing hostile will be attempted against that state in the present campaign.

I have wrote to the General Court of Massachusetts Bay, and transmitted a copy of the resolve for employing the eastern Indians, entreating their good offices in this instance, and their exertions to have them forthwith engaged and marched to join this army. I have desired five or six hundred of them to be enlisted for two or three years, if they will consent to it,—subject to an earlier discharge, if it shall be thought necessary,—and upon the same terms as the continental troops, if better cannot be had,—though I am hopeful they may.

In my letter of yesterday, I mentioned the arrival of part of the Connecticut light horse to assist in the defence of this place, and my objection to their horses being kept. Four or five hundred of them are now come in; and, in justice to their zeal and laudable attachment to the cause of their country, I am to inform you that they have consented to stay as long as occasion may require, though they should be at the expense of maintaining their horses themselves. They have pastured them out about the neighbourhood of Kingsbridge, (being unwilling to send them away,) at the rate of half a dollar per week each, meaning to leave it entirely with Congress either to allow or refuse it, as they shall judge proper. I promised to make this representation, and thought it my duty; and will only observe, that the motives which induced them at first to set out, were good and praise-worthy, and were, to afford the most speedy and early succour, which they apprehended would be wanted before the militia arrived. Their services may be extremely important,—being, most of them, if not all, men of reputation and of property.

The subject of the enclosed copy of a letter from governor Trumbull I beg leave to submit to the consideration of Congress. They will perceive, from his representation, the disquieting apprehensions that have seized on the minds of the people since the retreat of the northern army, and how exposed the northern frontiers of New York and New Hampshire are to the ravages and incursions of the Indians. How far it may be expedient to raise the battalion he conceives necessary to prevent the calamities and distresses he points out, they will determine, upon what he has said, and the necessity that may appear to them for the measure;—what I have done being only to lay the matter before them, in compliance with his wishes.

I have also enclosed a memorial from the surgeons' mates, setting forth the inadequacy of their pay to their services and maintenance, and praying that it may be increased. I shall observe, that they have a long time complained in this instance, and that some additional allowance may not be unnecessary.

As I am truly sensible the time

of Congress is much taken up with a variety of important matters, it is with unwillingness and pain I ever repeat a request after having once made it, or take the liberty of enforcing any opinion of mine after it is once given: but, as the establishing of some office for auditing accounts is a matter of exceeding importance to the public interest, I would beg leave once more to call the attention of Congress to an appointment competent to the purpose. Two motives induce me to urge the matter; first, a conviction of the utility of the measure—secondly, that I may stand exculpated, if, hereafter, it should appear that money has been improperly expended, and necessaries for the army obtained upon unreasonable terms.

For me, whose time is employed from the hour of my rising till I retire to bed again, to go into an examination of the accounts of such an army as this with any degree of precision and exactness, without neglecting other matters of equal importance, is utterly impracticable. All that I have been able to do (and that, in fact, was doing nothing) was, when the commissary, and quarter master, and director-general of the hospital (for it is to these the great advances are made) applied for warrants,—to make them at times produce a general account of their expenditures. But this answers no valuable purpose. It is the minutiæ that must be gone into,—the propriety of each charge examined,—the vouchers looked into;—and, with respect to the commissary-general, his victualling returns and expenditures of provisions should be compared with his purchases: otherwise a person in this department, if he was inclined to be knavish, might purchase large quantities with the public money, and sell one half of it again for private emolument; and yet his accounts upon paper would appear fair, and be supported with vouchers for every charge.

I do not urge this matter from a suspicion of any unfair practices in either of the departments before mentioned; and sorry should I be if this construction was put upon it, having a high opinion of the honour and integrity of these gentlemen. But there should, nevertheless, be some control as well upon their discretion as honesty:—to which may be added, that accounts become perplexed and confused by long standing, and the errors therein not so discoverable as if they underwent an early revision and examination. I am well apprized, that a treasury-office of accounts has been resolved upon, and an auditor-general for settling all public accounts: but, with all deference and submission to the opinion of Congress, these institutions are not calculated to prevent the inconveniences I have mentioned; nor can they be competent to the purposes, circumstanced as they are.

We have intelligence, from a deserter that came to us, that, on Wednesday morning, the Asia, Chatham, and Greyhound, men-of-war, weighed anchor, and (it was said) intended to pass up the North River above the city, to prevent the communication with the Jerseys. They did not attempt it, nor does he know what prevented them. A prisoner belonging to the tenth regiment, taken yesterday, informs, that they hourly expected admiral Howe and his fleet. He adds, that a vessel has arrived from them, and the prevailing opinion is, that an attack will be made immediately on their arrival.

By a letter from general Ward, I am informed, that the small-pox has broke out at Boston, and infected some of the troops. I have wrote to him to place the invalids under an officer, to remain till they are well; and to use every possible pre-

caution to prevent the troops from thence bringing the infection. The distresses and calamities we have already suffered by this disorder in one part of our army, I hope will excite his utmost care, that they may not be increased.—I have the honour to be, &c. G. W.

LETTER XXXV.

Gen. Washington to the President of Congress.

New York, September 2, 1776.

Sir,

As my intelligence of late has been rather unfavourable, and would be received with anxiety and concern, peculiarly happy should I esteem myself, were it in my power at this time to transmit such information to Congress, as would be more pleasing and agreeable to their wishes:—but, unfortunately for me,—unfortunately for them,—it is not.

Our situation is truly distressing. The check our detachment sustained on the twenty-seventh ultimo has dispirited too great a proportion of our troops, and filled their minds with apprehension and despair. The militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to a brave and manly opposition, in order to repair our losses, are dismayed, intractable, and impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off,—in some instances, almost by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time. This circumstance, of itself, independent of others, when fronted by a well-appointed enemy, superior in number to our whole collected force, would be sufficiently disagreeable: but, when their example has infected another part of the army,—when their want of discipline, and refusal of almost every kind of restraint and government, have produced a like conduct but too common to the whole, and an entire disregard of that order and subordination necessary to the well-doing of an army, and which had been inculcated before, as well as the nature of our military establishment would admit of,—our condition is still more alarming: and, with the deepest concern, I am obliged to confess my want of confidence in the generality of the troops.

All these circumstances fully confirm the opinion I ever entertained, and which I more than once in my letters took the liberty of mentioning to Congress, that no dependence could be put in a militia or other troops than those enlisted and imbodied for a longer period than our regulations heretofore have prescribed. I am persuaded, and as fully convinced as I am of any one fact that has happened, that our liberties must of necessity be greatly hazarded, if not entirely lost, if their defence is left to any but a permanent standing army,—I mean, one to exist during the war. Nor would the expense, incident to the support of such a body of troops as would be competent to almost every exigency, far exceed that which is daily incurred by calling in succour, and new enlistments, which, when effected, are not attended with any good consequences. Men who have been free, and subject to no control, cannot be reduced to order in an instant: and the privileges and exemptions they claim and will have, influence the conduct of others; and the aid derived from them is nearly counterbalanced by the disorder, irregularity and confusion they occasion.

I cannot find that the bounty of ten dollars is likely to produce the desired effect. When men can get double that sum to engage for a month or two in the militia, and that militia frequently called out, it is hardly to be expected. The addition of land might have a considerable influence on a permanent enlistment.

Our number of men, at present fit

for duty, is under twenty thousand: they were so by the last returns and best accounts I could get after the engagement on Long Island; since which numbers have deserted. I have ordered general Mercer to send the men intended for the flying camp to this place, about a thousand in number, and to try with the militia, if practicable, to make a diversion upon Staten Island.

Till of late I had no doubt in my own mind, of defending this place: nor should I have yet, if the men would do their duty: but this I despair of. It is painful, and extremely grating to me, to give such unfavourable accounts; but it would be criminal to conceal the truth at so critical a juncture. Every power I possess shall be exerted to serve the cause; and my first wish is, that, whatever may be the event, the Congress will do me the justice to think so.

If we should be obliged to abandon the town, ought it to stand as winter quarters for the enemy? They would derive great conveniences from it, on the one hand, and much property would be destroyed, on the other. It is an important question, but will admit of but little time for deliberation. At present I dare say the enemy mean to preserve it if they can. If Congress, therefore, should resolve upon the destruction of it, the resolution should be a profound secret, as the knowledge of it will make a capital change in their plans.—I have the honour to be, &c. G. W.

LETTER XXXVI.

Gen. Washington to the President of Congress.

Col. Morris's, on the Heights of Haerlem, September 24, 1776.

Sir,

FROM the hours allotted to sleep I will borrow a few moments to convey my thoughts on sundry important matters to Congress. I shall offer them with the sincerity which ought to characterize a man of candour, and with the freedom which may be used in giving useful information, without incurring the imputation of presumption.

We are now, as it were, upon the eve of another dissolution of our army. The remembrance of the difficulties which happened upon the occasion last year, the consequences which might have followed the change if proper advantages had been taken by the enemy, added to a knowledge of the present temper and situation of the troops, reflect but a very gloomy prospect upon the appearances of things now, and satisfy me, beyond the possibility of doubt, that, unless some speedy and effectual measures are adopted by Congress, our cause will be lost.

It is in vain to expect that any or more than a trifling part of this army will again engage in the service on the encouragement offered by Congress. When men find that their townsmen and companions are receiving twenty, thirty, and more dollars, for a few months' service (which is truly the case), it cannot be expected, without using compulsion; and to force them into the service would answer no valuable purpose. When men are irritated, and the passions inflamed, they fly hastily and cheerfully to arms: but, after the first emotions are over * * *, a soldier, reasoned with upon the goodness of the cause he is engaged in, and the inestimable rights he is contending for, hears you with patience, and acknowledges the truth of your observations, but adds, that it is of no more importance to him than others. The officer makes you the same reply, with this further remark, that his pay will not support him, and he cannot ruin himself and family to serve his country, when every member of the community is equally interested and benefited by his labours. * * *

It becomes evidently clear, then, that, as this contest is not likely to be the work of a day,—as the war must be carried on systematically,—and to do it you must have good officers,—there are, in my judgment, no other possible means to obtain them but by establishing your army upon a permanent footing, and giving your officers good pay. This will induce gentlemen and men of character to engage: and, till the bulk of your officers are composed of such persons as are actuated by principles of honour and a spirit of enterprise, you have little to expect from them. They ought to have such allowances as will enable them to live like, and support the characters of, gentlemen. * * * Besides, something is due to the man who puts his life in [your] hands, hazards his health, and forsakes the sweets of domestic enjoyment. Why a captain in the continental service should receive no more than five shillings currency per day for performing the same duties that an officer of the same rank in the British service receives ten shillings sterling for, I never could conceive, especially when the latter is provided with every necessary he requires upon the best terms, and the former can scarce procure them at any rate. There is nothing that gives a man consequence, and renders him fit for command, like a support that renders him independent of every body but the state he serves.

With respect to the men, nothing but a good bounty can obtain them upon a permanent establishment: and for no shorter time than the continuance of the war, ought they to be engaged; as facts incontestably prove, that the difficulty and cost of enlistments increase with time. When the army was first raised at Cambridge, I am persuaded the men might have been got, without a bounty, for the war. After this, they began to see, that the contest was not likely to end so speedily as was imagined, and to feel their consequence by remarking, that, to get in the militia in the course of the last year, many towns were induced to give them a bounty.

Foreseeing the evils resulting from this, and the destructive consequences which unavoidably would follow short enlistments, I took the liberty, in a long letter, (date not now recollected, as my letter-book is not here,) to recommend the enlistments for and during the war, assigning such reasons for it as experience has since convinced me were well founded. At that time, twenty dollars would, I am persuaded, have engaged the men for this term. But it will not do to look back: and, if the present opportunity is slipped, I am persuaded that twelve months more will increase our difficulties four-fold. I shall, therefore, take the freedom of giving it as my opinion, that a good bounty be immediately offered, aided by the proffer of at least a hundred or a hundred and fifty acres of land, and a suit of clothes and blanket to each non-commissioned officer and soldier; as I have good authority for saying, that, however high the men's pay may appear, it is barely sufficient, in the present scarcity and dearness of all kinds of goods, to keep them in clothes, much less afford support to their families.

If this encouragement, then, is given to the men, and such pay allowed the officers as will induce gentlemen of character and liberal sentiments to engage, and proper care and precaution used in the nomination, (having more regard to the characters of persons, than the number of men they can enlist,) we should in a little time have an army able to cope with any that can be opposed to it, as there are excellent materials to form one out of. But, while the only merit an officer possesses is his ability to raise men,—

while those men consider and treat him as an equal, and (in the character of an officer) regard him no more than a broomstick, being mixed together as one common herd, no order nor discipline can prevail; nor will the officer ever meet with that respect which is essentially necessary to due subordination.

To place any dependence upon militia is assuredly resting upon a broken staff,—men just dragged from the tender scenes of domestic life,—unaccustomed to the din of arms,—totally unacquainted with every kind of military skill; which, being followed by a want of confidence in themselves, when opposed to troops regularly trained, disciplined, and appointed, superior in knowledge, and superior in arms, makes them timid, and ready to fly from their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their manner of living (particularly in the lodging) brings on sickness in many, impatience in all, and such an unconquerable desire of returning to their respective homes, that it not only produces shameful and scandalous desertions among themselves, but infuses the like spirit into others.

Again; men accustomed to unbounded freedom, and no control, cannot brook the restraint which is indispensably necessary to the good order and government of an army; without which licentiousness and every kind of disorder triumphantly reign. To bring men to a proper degree of subordination is not the work of a day, a month, or even a year: and, unhappily for us and the cause we are engaged in, the little discipline I have been labouring to establish in the army under my immediate command, is in a manner done away, by having such a mixture of troops as have been called together within these few months.

Relaxed and unfit as our rules and regulations of war are for the government of an army, the militia (those properly so called; for of these we have two sorts, the six-months-men, and those sent in as a temporary aid) do not think themselves subject to them, and therefore take liberties which the soldier is punished for. This creates jealousy; jealousy begets dissatisfactions; and these by degrees ripen into mutiny, keeping the whole army in a confused and disordered state,—rendering the time of those who wish to see regularity and good order prevail, more unhappy than words can describe. Besides this, such repeated changes take place, that all arrangement is set at nought, and the constant fluctuation of things deranges every plan as fast as adopted.

These, sir, Congress may be assured, are but a small part of the inconveniences which might be enumerated, and attributed to militia: but there is one that merits particular attention, and that is the expense. Certain I am, that it would be cheaper to keep fifty or a hundred thousand in constant pay, than to depend upon half the number, and supply the other half occasionally by militia. The time the latter are in pay, before and after they are in camp, assembling and marching,—the waste of ammunition, the consumption of stores, which, in spite of every resolution or requisition of Congress, they must be furnished with, or sent home,—added to other incidental expenses consequent upon their coming and conduct in camp,—surpasses all idea, and destroys every kind of regularity and economy which you could establish among fixed and settled troops, and will, in my opinion, prove (if the scheme is adhered to) the ruin of our cause.

The jealousies of a standing army, and the evils to be apprehended from one, are remote, and, in my judgment, situated and circumstanced as we are, not at all to be dreaded

but the consequence of wanting one, according to my ideas, formed from the present view of things, is certain and inevitable ruin. For, if I was called upon to declare upon oath, whether the militia have been most serviceable or hurtful upon the whole, I should subscribe to the latter. I do not mean by this, however, to arraign the conduct of Congress: in so doing I should equally condemn my own measures, if I did not my judgment: but experience, which is the best criterion to work by, so fully, clearly, and decisively, reprobates the practice of trusting to militia, that no man who regards order, regularity and economy, or who has any regard for his own honour, character, or peace of mind, will risk them upon this issue. * * *

An army formed of good officers moves like clockwork: but there is no situation upon earth less enviable, nor more distressing, than that person's who is at the head of troops who are regardless of order and discipline, and who are unprovided with almost every necessary. In a word, the difficulties, which have for ever surrounded me since I have been in the service, and kept my mind constantly upon the stretch,—the wounds which my feelings (as an officer) have received by a thousand things, which have happened contrary to my expectation and wishes, * * *—added to a consciousness of my inability to govern an army composed of such discordant parts, and under such a variety of intricate and perplexing circumstances,—induce not only a belief, but a thorough conviction in my mind, that it will be impossible (unless there is a thorough change in our military system) for me to conduct matters in such a manner as to give satisfaction to the public, which is all the recompense I aim at, or ever wished for.

Before I conclude, I must apologize for the liberties taken in this letter, and for the blots and scratchings therein, not having time to give it more correctly.—With truth I can add, that, with every sentiment of respect and esteem, I am your and the Congress's most obedient, &c.

G. W.

LETTER XXXVII.

Gen. Washington to the President of Congress.

Haerlem, Oct. 4, 1776.

Sir,

BEFORE I knew of the late resolutions of Congress, which you did me the honour to enclose in your letter of the twenty-fourth, and before I was favoured with the visit of your committee, I took the liberty of giving you my sentiments on several points which seemed to be of importance. I have no doubt but that the committee will make such report of the state and condition of the army, as will induce Congress to believe, that nothing but the most vigorous exertions can put matters upon such a footing as to give this continent a fair prospect of success. Give me leave to say, sir,—I say it with due deference and respect, (and my knowledge of the facts, added to the importance of the cause, and the stake I hold in it, must justify the freedom,)—that your affairs are in a more unpromising way than you seem to apprehend.

Your army, as I mentioned in my last, is on the eve of its political dissolution. True it is, you have voted a larger one in lieu of it: but the season is late; and there is a material difference between voting of battalions and raising of men. In the latter there are more difficulties than Congress are aware of; which makes it my duty (as I have been informed of the prevailing sentiments of this army) to inform them, that, unless the pay of the officers, especially that of the field-officers, is raised, the

chief part of those that are worth retaining will leave the service at the expiration of the present term, as the soldiers will also, if some greater encouragement is not offered them than twenty dollars and a hundred acres of land.

Nothing less, in my opinion, than a suit of clothes, annually given to each non-commissioned officer and soldier, in addition to the pay and bounty, will avail: and I question whether that will do, as the enemy (from the information of one John Mash, who, with six others, was taken by our guards) are giving ten pounds bounty for recruits, and have got a battalion under major Rogers nearly completed upon Long Island.

Nor will less pay, according to my judgment, than I have taken the liberty of mentioning in the enclosed estimate, retain such officers as we could wish to have continued. The difference per month in each battalion will amount to better than a hundred pounds. To this may be added the pay of the staff-officers; for it is presumable they will also require an augmentation: but, being few in number, the sum will not be greatly increased by them, and consequently is a matter of no great moment: but it is a matter of no small importance to make the several offices desirable. When the pay and establishment of an officer once become objects of interested attention, the sloth, negligence, and even disobedience of orders, which at this time but too generally prevail, will be purged off. But, while the service is viewed with indifference,—while the officer conceives, that he is rather conferring than receiving an obligation, —there will be a total relaxation of all order and discipline, and every thing will move heavily on, to the great detriment of the service, and inexpressible trouble and vexation of the general.

The critical situation of our affairs at this time will justify my saying, that no time is to be lost in making of fruitless experiments. An unavailing trial of a month to get an army upon the terms proposed, may render it impracticable to do it at all, and prove fatal to our cause; as I am not sure whether any rubs in the way of our enlistments, or unfavourable turn in our affairs, may not prove the means of the enemy recruiting men faster than we do. To this may be added the inextricable difficulty of forming one corps out of another, and arranging matters with any degree of order, in the face of an enemy, who are watching for advantages.

At Cambridge, last year, where the officers (and more than a sufficiency of them) were all upon the spot, we found it a work of such extreme difficulty to know their sentiments, (each having some terms to propose,) that I despaired once of getting the arrangements completed: and I do suppose, that at least a hundred alterations took place before matters were finally adjusted. What must it be, then, under the present regulation, where the officer is to negotiate this matter with the state he comes from, distant, perhaps, two or three hundred miles?—some of whom, without leave or license from me, set out to make personal application, the moment the resolve got to their hands. What kind of officers these are, I leave Congress to judge.

If an officer of reputation (for none other should be applied to) is asked to stay, what answer can he give, but, in the first place, that he does not know whether it is at his option to do so, no provision being made in the resolution of Congress, even recommendatory of this measure; consequently, that it rests with the state he comes from (surrounded, perhaps, with a variety of applications, and influenced, probably, by local attachments) to determine whether he can be provided for or not? In the next place, if he is an officer of merit,

and knows that the state he comes from is to furnish more battalions than it at present has in the service, he will scarcely, after two years' faithful services, think of continuing in the rank he now bears, when new creations are to be made, and men appointed to offices (nowise superior in merit, and ignorant perhaps of service) over his head. A committee, sent to the army from each state, may upon the spot fix things with a degree of propriety and certainty; and is the only method I can see of bringing matters to a decision with respect to the officers of the army. But what can be done, in the meanwhile, towards the arrangement in the country, I know not. In the one case you run the hazard of losing your officers; in the other of encountering delay, unless some method could be devised of forwarding both at the same instant.

Upon the present plan, I plainly foresee an intervention of time between the old and new army, which must be filled up with militia, (if to be had,) with whom no man, who has any regard for his own reputation, can undertake to be answerable for consequences. I shall also be mistaken in my conjectures, if we do not lose the most valuable officers in this army, under the present mode of appointing them; consequently, if we have an army at all, it will be composed of materials not only entirely raw, but (if uncommon pains are not taken) entirely unfit: and I see such a distrust and jealousy of military power, that the commander in chief has not an opportunity, even by recommendation, to give the least assurances of reward for the most essential services. In a word, such a cloud of perplexing circumstances appear before me, without one flattering hope, that I am thoroughly convinced, unless the most vigorous and decisive exertions are immediately adopted to remedy these evils, that the certain and absolute loss of our liberties will be the inevitable consequence; as one unhappy stroke will throw a powerful weight into the scale against us, enabling general Howe to recruit his army as fast as we shall ours,—numbers being disposed [to join him,] and many actually doing so already. Some of the most probable remedies, and such as experience has brought to my more intimate knowledge, I have taken the liberty to point out: the rest I beg leave to submit to the consideration of Congress.

I ask pardon for taking up so much of their time with my opinions. But I should betray that trust which they and my country have reposed in me, were I to be silent upon a matter so extremely interesting.—With the most perfect esteem, I have the honour to be, &c. G. W.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Gen. Washington to the President of Congress.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, Dec. 27, 1776.

Sir,

I HAVE the pleasure of congratulating you upon the success of an enterprise, which I had formed against a detachment of the enemy lying in Trenton, and which was executed yesterday morning.

The evening of the twenty-fifth I ordered the troops intended for this service to parade back of M'Konkey's ferry, that they might begin to pass as soon as it grew dark, imagining we should be able to throw them all over, with the necessary artillery, by twelve o'clock, and that we might easily arrive at Trenton by five in the morning, the distance being about nine miles. But the quantity of ice, made that night, impeded the passage of the boats so much, that it was three o'clock before the artillery could all be got

over; and near four, before the troops took up their line of march.

This made me despair of surprising the town, as I well knew we could not reach it before the day was fairly broke. But, as I was certain there was no making a retreat without being discovered, and harassed on re-passing the river, I determined to push on at all events. I formed my detachment into two divisions, one to march by the lower or river road, the other by the upper or Pennington road. As the divisions had nearly the same distance to march, I ordered each of them, immediately upon forcing the out-guards, to push directly into the town, that they might charge the enemy before they had time to form.

The upper division arrived at the enemy's advanced post exactly at eight o'clock: and, in three minutes after, I found, from the fire on the lower road, that that division had also got up. The out-guards made but small opposition, though, for their numbers, they behaved very well, keeping up a constant retreating fire from behind houses. We presently saw their main body formed; but, from their motions, they seemed undetermined how to act.

Being hard pressed by our troops, who had already got possession of their artillery, they attempted to file off by a road on their right, leading to Princeton. But, perceiving their intention, I threw a body of troops in their way; which immediately checked them. Finding, from our disposition, that they were surrounded, and that they must inevitably be cut to pieces if they made any further resistance, they agreed to lay down their arms. The number that submitted in this manner was twenty-three officers and eight hundred and eighty-six men. Colonel Rahl the commanding officer, and seven others, were found wounded in the town. I do not exactly know how many they had killed; but I fancy not above twenty or thirty, as they never made any regular stand. Our loss is very trifling indeed,—only two officers and one or two privates wounded.

I find that the detachment of the enemy consisted of the three Hessian regiments of Lanspach, Knyphausen, and Rahl, amounting to about fifteen hundred men, and a troop of British light horse: but, immediately upon the beginning of the attack, all those who were not killed or taken, pushed directly down the road towards Bordentown. These would likewise have fallen into our hands, could my plan have been completely carried into execution. General Ewing was to have crossed before day at Trenton ferry, and taken possession of the bridge leading out of town: but the quantity of ice was so great, that, though he did every thing in his power to effect it, he could not get over. This difficulty also hindered general Cadwallader from crossing with the Pennsylvania militia from Bristol. He got part of his foot over: but finding it impossible to embark his artillery, he was obliged to desist.

I am fully confident, that, could the troops under generals Ewing and Cadwallader have passed the river, I should have been able, with their assistance, to have driven the enemy from all their posts below Trenton. But the numbers I had with me being inferior to theirs below me, and a strong battalion of light infantry being at Princeton above me, I thought it most prudent to return the same evening with the prisoners and the artillery we had taken. We found no stores of any consequence in the town.

In justice to the officers and men, I must add, that their behaviour upon this occasion reflects the highest honour upon them. The difficulty of passing the river in a very severe

night, and their march through a violent storm of snow and hail, did not in the least abate their ardour: but, when they came to the charge, each seemed to vie with the other in pressing forward: and were I to give a preference to any particular corps, I should do great injustice to the others.

Colonel Baylor, my first aide-de-camp, will have the honour of delivering this to you; and from him you may be made acquainted with many other particulars. His spirited behaviour, upon every occasion, requires me to recommend him to your particular notice.—I have the honour to be, &c. G. W.

LETTER XXXIX.

Gen. Washington to the President of Congress.

Pluckemin, January 5, 1777.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you, that, since the date of my last from Trenton, I have removed with the army under my command to this place. The difficulty of crossing the Delaware, on account of the ice, made our passage over tedious, and gave the enemy an opportunity of drawing in their several cantonments, and assembling their whole force at Princeton. Their large piquets advanced towards Trenton,—their great preparations, and some intelligence I had received,—added to their knowledge, that the first of January brought on a dissolution of the best part of our army,—gave me the strongest reasons to conclude that an attack upon us was meditating.

Our situation was most critical, and our force small. To remove immediately was again destroying every dawn of hope which had begun to revive in the breasts of the Jersey militia; and to bring those troops, which had first crossed the Delaware, and were lying at Crowix's under general Cadwallader, and those under general Mifflin at Bordentown, (amounting in the whole to about three thousand six hundred,) to Trenton, was to bring them to an exposed place. One or the other, however, was unavoidable: the latter was preferred, and they were ordered to join us at Trenton, which they did, by a night-march, on the first instant.

On the second, according to my expectation, the enemy began to advance upon us; and, after some skirmishing, the head of their column reached Trenton about four o'clock, whilst their rear was as far back as Maidenhead. They attempted to pass Sanpink Creek, which runs through Trenton, at different places; but, finding the fords guarded, halted, and kindled their fires. We were drawn up on the other side of the creek. In this situation we remained till dark, cannonading the enemy, and receiving the fire of their field-pieces, which did us but little damage.

Having by this time discovered that the enemy were greatly superior in number, and that their design was to surround us, I ordered all our baggage to be removed silently to Burlington soon after dark; and at twelve o'clock, after renewing our fires, and leaving guards at the bridge in Trenton, and other passes on the same stream above, marched by a round-about road to Princeton, where I knew they could not have much force left, and might have stores. One thing I was certain of, that it would avoid the appearance of a retreat, (which was of course,—or to run the hazard of the whole army being cut off,) whilst we might, by a fortunate stroke, withdraw general Howe from Trenton, and give some reputation to our arms. Happily we succeeded. We found Princeton about sun-rise with only three regiments, and three troops of light-horse in it, two of which were on their

march to Trenton. These three regiments, especially the two first, made a gallant resistance, and, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, must have lost five hundred men: upwards of one hundred of them were left dead in the field; and, with what I have with me, and what were taken in the pursuit and carried across the Delaware, there are near three hundred prisoners, fourteen of whom are officers, all British.

This piece of good fortune is counterbalanced by the loss of the brave and worthy general Mercer, colonels Hazlet and Potter, captain Neal of the artillery, captain Fleming, who commanded the first Virginia regiment, and four or five other valuable officers, who, with about twenty-five or thirty privates, were slain in the field. Our whole loss cannot be ascertained, as many, who were in pursuit of the enemy, (who were chased three or four miles,) are not yet come in.

The rear of the enemy's army lying at Maidenhead (not more than five or six miles from Princeton) was up with us before our pursuit was over: but, as I had the precaution to destroy the bridge over Stony Brook, (about half a mile from the field of action,) they were so long retarded there as to give us time to move off in good order for this place. We took two brass field-pieces; but, for want of horses, could not bring them away. We also took some blankets, shoes, and a few other trifling articles, burned the hay, and destroyed such other things as the shortness of the time would admit of.

My original plan, when I set out from Trenton, was, to have pushed on to Brunswick: but the harassed state of our troops, (many of them having had no rest for two nights and a day,) and the danger of losing the advantage we had gained by aiming at too much, induced me, by the advice of my officers, to relinquish the attempt: but, in my judgment, six or eight hundred fresh troops, upon a forced march, would have destroyed all their stores and magazines,—taken (as we have since learned) their military chest, containing seventy thousand pounds,—and put an end to the war. The enemy, from the best intelligence I have been able to get, were so much alarmed at the apprehension of this, that they marched immediately to Brunswick without halting, except at the bridges, (for I also took up those on Millstone, on the different routes to Brunswick,) and got there before day.

From the best information I have received, general Howe has left no men either at Trenton or Princeton. The truth of this I am endeavouring to ascertain, that I may regulate my movements accordingly.

The militia are taking spirits, and, I am told, are coming in fast from this state: but I fear those from Philadelphia will scarcely submit to the hardships of a winter campaign much longer, especially as they very unluckily sent their blankets with their baggage to Burlington. I must do them the justice, however, to add, that they have undergone more fatigue and hardship, than I expected militia (especially citizens) would have done at this inclement season. I am just moving to Morristown, where I shall endeavour to put them under the best cover I can:—hitherto we have been without any; and many of our poor soldiers quite barefoot, and ill clad in other respects.—I have the honour to be, &c. G. W.

END OF VOL. IV.

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